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# THE AMERICAN STORY

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THE IRRESPONSIBLES  
THE AMERICAN CAUSE  
A TIME TO SPEAK  
A TIME TO ACT  
THE AMERICAN STORY

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THE  
AMERICAN STORY

*TEN BROADCASTS*

*by*

ARCHIBALD MACLEISH

DUELL, SLOAN AND PEARCE

NEW YORK

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*To*

MUNA LEE

A POET OF THE AMERICAS



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## FOREWORD

The ten radio scripts which make up this book were broadcast over the National Broadcasting Company's system in February, March, and April, 1944. Written for N.B.C.'s University of the Air, their theme is the American experience—the experience common to the Americans of the early settlements and voyages, of whatever race.

American historical writing, in Spanish, French, and Portuguese as well as English, has emphasized the influence of the various European derivations which distinguish the American nations from each other, rather than the effect of the common American experience which has given the Americans, in part at least, a common past. There is evidence in the contemporary narratives of the discovery and the settlements that the American continent played a more important role in the formation of the American peoples than is generally allowed. Muna Lee, who examined the early Spanish and Portuguese and English texts in preparation for the writing of these scripts, offered me a wealth of material, familiar and unfamiliar, which no brief series of radio programs could possibly have exhausted—a wealth of material which suggests that a comprehensive history of the Americans may some day be written in which the American continent will be central figure as well as central scene. America was not only a new world discovered and peopled by men from the old. America was also men from the Old World rediscovered by the experience of the New.

The choice of radio to present materials of this kind may seem curious. Original narratives and first-hand accounts of early voyages and settlements and wars are commonly considered to belong in the footnotes and bibliographies of sober historical writings. The publications in which these texts are reproduced are treated as scholars' tools rather than as books for general readers, and their scholarly designation as "source materials" is accepted as a final judgment on their popular interest. They are builders' stones to be used for new constructions of scholarship, not finished works of value and consideration in themselves.

Readers of such publications as those of the Hakluyt Society will know what to think of this opinion. The first-hand accounts of the discoveries and settlements are, of course, anything but scholars' stone-quarries. They are narratives of the greatest and most lively interest in their own right. Indeed their living interest sometimes exceeds their value as authorities and "sources." There is no account of Columbus's first voyage, magnificent as many of the accounts are, which compares for interest and excitement with the record of the Admiral's own journal as Las Casas has preserved it.

Radio offers—or so it seems to me—an effective medium for the general publication of excerpts from texts of this character. I do not refer to the familiar "dramatizations" through which radio commonly approaches historical materials. To place historical personages in historical situations and then imagine the words they must have spoken to each other is to imitate the historical dramas of the stage at the expense of radio's unique function and unique opportunity. Because radio is limited mechanically to sound, and particularly to the sound of speech, radio is capable of a concentration upon the speech itself, the text itself, which can give words a life and a significance they rarely achieve outside the



printed page—and which they achieve there only for the most gifted and fortunate readers. It is, or should be, possible for radio, therefore, to present a given text loyally and literally and simply, and yet in such a perspective and with such a focus of attention as to give breath and presentness and meaning to its words.

I say this should be possible. I am not certain that it now is. The experimental work in the use of radio as a dramatic medium which centered around the Columbia Workshop in the thirties seems to have ended, and the concern with the development of radio as a stage for the word, different in kind because different in character from the stage of the theatre, has apparently ended with it. The contemporary effort seems to be directed to the development of radio not as a stage at all but as an instrument. Gifted writers and directors have learned how to play the instrument effectively and with feeling. Music has been artfully blended with speech to evoke emotion. Skilful devices have been employed to produce dramatic effects. But the earlier hope for a new stage on which the spoken word, freed of all external paraphernalia, should create by its own power and eloquence the emotions of which it alone is capable, has not been realized. If anything, it is more remote today than it was ten years ago.

The successful use of radio for the publication of basic historical texts need not necessarily depend upon the development of radio as a stage for the word—a stage for poetry. The two are, however, related. In both cases the purpose is to let the words speak for themselves, as radio, in theory at least, should be able to let them speak. The publication of historical texts in this manner will be more effective when radio as a theatre is further developed. Meantime, however, it may serve a useful purpose to attempt, as was attempted in these ten programs, the experimental broadcasting, in various forms, of excerpts from a few American narratives

of authority and interest. Whatever the effectiveness of the broadcasts, the historical texts themselves are well worth hearing.

I should like to acknowledge here the debt I owe to Muna Lee, not only for her assistance in the collection of historical materials for these broadcasts, but for her continuing encouragement in their preparation. A poet who is also a sound scholar, a mistress of tongues, and a profound believer in a cause, is a rare and wonderful thing. Muna Lee is all four. I should like also to express my gratitude to Frank Papp, who directed these programs, and to the actors and actresses who took part—above all to Arnold Moss and Alexander Skourby, who carried the heaviest burden.

A. MACL.

I

THE ADMIRAL



## THE ADMIRAL

SOUND: *The "Gloria in Excelsis" sung by harsh, untrained, devout and passionate voices, the sound heard as though beyond a heavy door.*

NARRATOR: From the ancient chronicles, the narratives, the letters, from the pages written by those who saw with their own eyes and were part of it, the American record is derived—the record common to all of us who are American of whatever American country and whatever tongue.

For many centuries now we have been told of our difference from each other because our tongues are different and because our ancestors came from different parts of the Eastern Hemisphere and because we differ in look and in customs, some of us.

These differences are real and important. They have value. But what is it that binds men together even more than common blood and common speech? Is it not a common experience of the earth—an experience common to them but not to others? And have we remembered in the Americas that we share in common an experience no other men living or dead have known—that this experience is, indeed, our history?

SOUND: *Men's voices.*

NARRATOR: We share in common, all of us who are Americans, the experience of the cabin of the little ship where, in the last dark before the dawn of Friday the twelfth day of October in the year fourteen ninety-two a man sat writing by a candle at a board.

THE ADMIRAL: The land was first seen by a sailor named Rodrigo de Triana. . . . At two hours after midnight the land was sighted at a distance of two leagues.

NARRATOR: These are the words Columbus wrote in his cabin on the warm October night when the ship lay hove-to in the trade wind off that unknown beach, the square-sail slapping at the heavy stays, the lift and slide of the water on the hull, the heels overhead on the planks, the thankful voices.

Throughout his voyage the discoverer wrote in his journal describing, as he tells us, "each night what passed in the day . . . and each day how I navigated at night."

The narrative he wrote is still, for those who can put themselves in imagination in Columbus's ship, a wonderful and moving story . . . the greatest narrative perhaps a man has ever written. The words are the simple, matter-of-fact words of the official record, but they will not deceive those who can imagine for themselves what the westward ocean was to men

who were not certain that it had another shore, or what that shore would be, or how, if ever, they would return from it.

THE ADMIRAL:

But the Admiral, at ten the previous night, being on the castle of the poop, saw a light though it was so uncertain he could not affirm it was land. It was like a wax candle rising and falling, as if people on shore were passing it from one hand to another. . . .

NARRATOR:

The Admiral was, of course, Columbus. It was by this title he demanded that his contemporaries should address him. And to posterity in all the Spanish countries he is the Admiral still. But who then was the Admiral Columbus, of what nation? Genoese because he was born there? Spanish because he sailed in Spanish ships? Dominican because he was buried in the city of that name?

Or American—of every American nation equally?

There were many discoverers of many tongues but of one fame: that they found a shore of this continent—one shore or another. There were the English ships on the north coast sliding in through the fog past the unseen islands, the water dripping from the heavy sails, the creak of the gear as the seas lifted. . . .

ENGLISH VOICE:  
(*North Country,  
heavy, speaking  
as to himself*)

A man can be wrong in the fog, but I heard it . . . when the wind stirred from the starboard I heard . . . or the blood in my ears it might be . . . but I heard surf . . . or a

ENGLISH VOICE: sound like surf . . . what the surf would  
(*cont.*) sound like in a Christian country.

SOUND: *The surf far off, deadened by fog.*

ENGLISH VOICE: It is surf. It's the shore. There is land there.  
(*shouting*) Land! Land ho! Land to the star-  
board! Land ho! (*prolonged*)

NARRATOR: There were the Spanish ships with the Trades  
behind them, the islands looming like the  
trade-wind clouds.

SOUND: *The steady wind in the stays.*

SPANISH VOICE: Tierra! Tierra! Tierra! (*prolonged*)

NARRATOR: The Portuguese ships on the Patagonian  
coast in the winter landfall.

PORTUGUESE  
VOICE: Terra! Terra!

NARRATOR: The Dutch off the east capes with the low  
dunes and the oak trees.

DUTCH VOICE: Land in zicht! Land! Land!

NARRATOR: The sight of the land was called out on these  
coasts in many languages. There were French-  
men, Dutchmen, Englishmen, Portuguese,  
Swedes, Spaniards, Norwegians. There were  
many records in many tongues, but to us,  
Americans, they are all one record and our  
own. And the greatest of all is the Admiral's.



THE ADMIRAL: I left the city of Granada on the twelfth day of May, in the same year of 1492, being Saturday, and came to the town of Palos, which is a seaport, where I equipped three vessels well suited for such service; and departed from that port, well supplied with provisions and with many sailors on the third day of August of the same year, being Friday, half an hour before sunrise. . . .

NARRATOR: Each day what had passed in the night and each night how he navigated by day—so, day after day and night after night, the Admiral wrote in his cabin in the slow continuing sound of the caravels in the great sea, the swell lifting, and following after, and falling, the trace of the wake dissolving on the water as the Admiral watched it from his cabin port over the high stern.

THE ADMIRAL: . . . taking the route to the islands of Canaria, belonging to Your Highness which are in the said ocean sea, that I might thence take my departure for navigating until I should arrive at the Indies, and give the letter of Your Highness' to those Princes . . .

NARRATOR: It was on Thursday, the ninth of August, that the Admiral, as part of his duty, as he says, "to write an account of all the voyage very punctually," entered in his book the Canary landfall.

THE ADMIRAL: . . . saw a great fire issue from the Mountain on the island of Tenerife which is of great height. . . . Many honorable Spanish gentlemen who were native of the island of Hierro declared that every year they saw land to the west of the Canaries . . . (*long pause*) . . . this day made nineteen leagues, and arranged to reckon less than the number run because, if the voyage was of long duration, the people would not be so terrified and disheartened. . . .

NARRATOR: That was Sunday, the ninth of September, well out to sea beyond the last known islands.

Ponder that deception and what it has to say of the Admiral's steadfastness and of the dangers he foresaw. If the voyage were of long duration, and if the people on the ships should learn how far they were from the known world—how far toward the unknown world—terror would take them. That secret was to be the Admiral's alone. He did not fear it.

THE ADMIRAL: . . . that day they sailed on their course which was West and made twenty leagues or more but only counted sixteen. They saw a large piece of the mast of a ship of a hundred and twenty tons but were unable to take it.

NARRATOR: That was September eleventh, Tuesday, the thirty-ninth day from Palos roads. There had been ships before them in that ocean, then—and not to return from it.

- THE ADMIRAL: On this day at the commencement of the night the needles turned a half-point to the North West and in the morning they turned somewhat more North West.
- NARRATOR: This variation, familiar enough now, had never been observed before. If any proof were needed that the caravels were moving out of the known into the unknown world the variation of the compass needle was that proof. Even the surest and most certain thing—the central certainty of every sailor's life—was sure no longer.
- THE ADMIRAL: Here those of the caravel *Niña* reported that they had seen a tern and a boatswain's bird and these birds never go more than twenty-five leagues from the land. . . .
- NARRATOR: It was Friday, the fourteenth of September, almost a month before the land was found, that the Admiral wrote these words at his cabin table at the day's end.
- THE ADMIRAL: In the early part of the night there fell from heaven into the sea a marvellous flame of fire at a distance of about four or five leagues. . . .
- NARRATOR: Saturday, the fifteenth of September, and already signs and portents.
- THE ADMIRAL: The weather was like April in Andalusia. Here began to see many tufts of grass which were very green and appeared to have been quite recently torn from the land.

NARRATOR: Sunday, September the sixteenth.

THE ADMIRAL: . . . the pilots observed the north point and found that the needles turned a full point to the west of north. So the mariners were alarmed and dejected and did not give their reason.

NARRATOR: But the Admiral knew. Or rather the Admiral gave them a reason—and a good reason though not the true one. The Admiral told them, speaking as Dante might have spoken, that “the cause was that the star makes the movement and not the needles.”

It is true that the Pole Star describes a circle round the pole of the earth—but not a circle equal to the variation of the needle.

THE ADMIRAL: The sea water was found to be less salt than it had been since leaving the Canaries. The breezes were always soft. Everyone was pleased and the best sailors went ahead to sight the first land. They saw many tunny fish and the crew of the *Niña* killed one. These signs of land came from the west in which direction I trust in that high God in whose hands are all victories that very soon we shall sight land. In that morning a white bird was seen which has not the habit of sleeping on the sea.

NARRATOR: This was the seventeenth of September. A Monday. The landfall many weeks ahead.

THE ADMIRAL: A great cloud appeared in the north which is a sign of the proximity of land. There was also some drizzling rain without wind which is a sure sign of land. At dawn two or three land-birds came singing to the ship and they disappeared before sunset.

NARRATOR: The eighteenth. The nineteenth. The twentieth.

THE ADMIRAL: . . . shaped a course West North West more or less, her head turning from one to the other point. My people were much excited at the thought that in these seas no wind ever blew in the direction of Spain.

NARRATOR: They feared, that is, what many men had said and feared before—that there was no return from that ocean.

THE ADMIRAL: The sea being smooth and calm the crew began to murmur, saying that here there was no great sea and that the wind would never blow so that they could return to Spain. Afterwards the sea rose very much without wind which astonished them. Thus the high sea was very necessary for me such as had not appeared but in the time of the Jews when they went out of Egypt and murmured against Moses.

NARRATOR: Murmured against the Admiral and only a great sea without wind which astonished them could stop their tongues.

NARRATOR:  
(*cont.*)

And this was the twenty-third of September with seventeen days still before them.

THE ADMIRAL:

At sunset Martín Alonso went up on the poop of his ship and with much joy called to the Admiral claiming the reward as he had sighted land. When I heard this positively declared I say that I gave thanks to the Lord on my knees while Martín Alonso said the *Gloria in Excelsis* with his people. My crew did the same.

NARRATOR:

This was Martín Alonso Pinzón, the good navigator who sailed in the *Pinta*, which was ahead of the *Santa María* on which the Admiral sailed, and ahead of the *Niña* also. The sunset was the sunset of the twenty-fifth. But there was no land. And the days passed. And the nights also.

THE ADMIRAL:

. . . the sea smooth as a river . . . there was much weed. There was a heavy shower of rain—a white bird was also seen that appeared to be a gull.

NARRATOR:

Wednesday the twenty-sixth. Thursday the twenty-seventh. Friday the twenty-eighth. The twenty-ninth. The thirtieth. The first of October. The second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth and now the seventh.

THE ADMIRAL:

This day at sunrise, the caravel *Niña*, which went ahead, being the best sailor and pushed

forward as much as possible to sight the land first so as to enjoy the reward which the Sovereigns had promised to whoever should see it first, hoisted a flag at the mast-head and fired a gun as a signal that she had sighted land. (*Pause*) No land was seen during the afternoon.

**NARRATOR:** Twice they had found land and there was no land. And the needle altered.

**THE ADMIRAL:** . . . And passed a great number of birds flying from north to southwest. This gave rise to the belief that the birds were flying from the winter which might be supposed to be near in the land from which they came.

**NARRATOR:** To which the Admiral adds: "Most of the islands held by the Portuguese were discovered by the flight of birds." And to whom do you think those words were written in that little cabin looking aft over the wide wake—to whom but to himself?

**THE ADMIRAL:** Throughout the night birds were heard passing.

**NARRATOR:** Throughout the night of the eighth of October and of the ninth in the soft strange wind that was like April in Seville as the Admiral wrote so often in his book . . . but yet not like it.

**THE ADMIRAL:** Here the people could endure no longer. They complained of the length of the voyage. But

THE ADMIRAL:  
(*cont.*)

the Admiral cheered them up in the best way that he could. He added that however much they might complain, he had to go to the Indies and that he would go on until he found them with the help of God.

NARRATOR:

And so they came to the candle moving on the dark and to Rodrigo's landfall. It was two hours past midnight of Friday, the twelfth of October, when Rodrigo de Triana, with the old moon searching beyond him into the shadow to the west, imagined, and then did not imagine, the glimmer of the surf along the beach the Indians called Guanahani and Columbus called San Salvador and we call Watling Island.

SOUND:

*The surf far off.*

NARRATOR:

It is not difficult even now to imagine with what emotions they lay there for those few remaining hours of the night, "hove-to" as the Admiral's journal puts it, "waiting for daylight." There would have been the rattle of canvas as the ship came round, the unaccustomed silence as she lost way in the long swells, and under that whispering silence, at first faint, then nearer as the wind moved, the long unending thunder of the surf.

SOUND:

*The shaking of canvas and rattle of the gear as the ship comes up into the wind, the fading sound of the water under the hull, and under the silence the far surf.*



NARRATOR:

There would have been the now-strange odor of the land, the blur of moonlight on the shining beaches, the low line of the trees on the faint sky, the men along the deck rails staring at that glimmering shore, and then, as the dawn came, trees and the land's true shape before them.

SOUND:

*The sliding of the water along the ships' sides and the gulls beginning.*

NARRATOR:

And so they stood in with the first light and "presently," as the Admiral's journal puts it, "they saw naked people," but what people, of what race or nation they could not tell; and the Admiral went on shore in the armed boat with Martín Alonso Pinzón and Vicente, his brother; and the Admiral took the Royal Standard and the two captains had two banners of the green cross with an F and a Y for Fernando and Ysabel and a crown over each letter; and they saw trees, very green after that long journey, and much fresh water, lovely after the stale water in the casks, and many and different kinds of fruits; and the Admiral "took possession of the said island for the King and for the Queen, his Lords." And as for the naked people of the island—the Admiral wrote these words in his cabin at the day's end of that long-hoped-for day:

THE ADMIRAL:

I, that we might form great friendship, for I knew that they were a people who could be

THE ADMIRAL:  
(*cont.*)

more easily freed and converted to our holy faith by love than by force, gave to some of them red caps, and glass beads to put around their necks, and many other things of little value, which gave them great pleasure, and made them so much our friends that it was a marvel to see.

NARRATOR:

But for caution's sake or for some other reason the Admiral and his companions pushed off in the ship's boats beyond the surf and held there with the oars in the bright sun and the sound of the sea, the voices of the Indians calling and laughing to them through the breaking water.

SOUND:

*The surf strong and near and the shouts of Indian voices, men's and women's, over the surf sound.*

THE ADMIRAL:

They came to the ship's boats where we were, swimming and bringing us parrots, cotton threads in skeins, darts, and many other things; and we exchanged them for other things that we gave them, such as glass beads and small bells. In fine, they took all and gave what they had with good will. It appeared to me to be a race of people very poor in everything. They go naked as when their mothers bore them, and so do the women although I did not see more than one young girl.

All I saw were youths, none more than thirty years of age. They are very well made, with

very handsome bodies, and very good countenances. Their hair is short and coarse almost like the hairs of a horse's tail.

I saw no beast of any kind except parrots on this island.

SOUND: *The surf far off again and the ships at anchor.*

NARRATOR: For two days they lay off the shore of that island, puzzling over the look of the land and the people, their minds returning always to the question of Cathay and the Great Khan whose islands these should be if the Admiral's maps were true maps.

THE ADMIRAL: I was attentive, and took trouble to ascertain if there was gold. I saw some of them had a small piece fastened in a hole they have in the nose, and by signs I was able to make out that to the south, or going from the island to the south, there was a king who had great cups full, and who possessed a great quantity.

NARRATOR: The shape of their dark hands making the cup's form in the sunlight by that sea stands in the Admiral's narrative, after four centuries and more, still vivid.

SOUND: *The moving ships again and the run of the long swells and the wind in the canvas.*

THE ADMIRAL: I do not wish to stop, in discovering and visiting many islands, to find gold. These people

THE ADMIRAL: make signs that it is worn on the arms and  
(*cont.*) legs; and it must be gold, for they point to  
some pieces I have. I cannot err, with the help  
of our Lord, in finding out where this gold has  
its origin.

NARRATOR: And so, with God's help, and the gestures of  
the Indians to guide them, they sailed on with  
the sound of the sea beneath and the ships'  
gear straining in the steady wind.

SOUND: *The ships' gear and the long seas.*

THE ADMIRAL: Now, as I am writing this, I make sail with  
the wind at the south to sail round the island  
and to navigate until I find Samaot which is  
the island or city where there is gold, so all  
the natives say.

NARRATOR: And yet there were other things than gold  
among those green and golden islands and  
even the Admiral saw them as his journal  
bears human witness to this day.

THE ADMIRAL: Here the fish are so unlike ours that it is won-  
derful. Some are the shape of dories and the  
finest colors in the world, blue, yellow, red and  
other tints, all painted in various ways and  
the colors are so bright that there is not a man  
who would not be astonished, and would not  
take great delight in seeing them.

SOUND: *The sea running against the ship.*

THE ADMIRAL: Arriving at this cape I found the smell of the trees and flowers so delicious that it seemed the pleasantest thing in the world.

SOUND: *The sea running.*

THE ADMIRAL: Throughout the island all is green and the herbage like April in Andalusia. The songs of the birds were so pleasant that it seemed as if a man could never wish to leave that place. The flocks of parrots concealed the sun.

NARRATOR: And yet a man must leave even such islands as these and go on and search to the westward.

THE ADMIRAL: I shall then shape a course for another much larger island, which I believe to be Cipango, judging from the signs made by the Indians I bring with me. They call it Cuba and they say there are ships and many skillful sailors there. I am still resolved to go to the mainland and the city of Guisay and to deliver the letter of Your Highnesses to the Gran Can, requesting a reply and returning with it.

NARRATOR: And so the Admiral went on by the windward and the leeward channels to the island, as he thought, of Cipango, which would have been Japan. But it was not to Marco Polo's city of Kinsay or to the palace of the Great Khan he came but to a different country. And it was not from the "islands of India recently discovered beyond the Ganges" that he returned, as he wrote the King's Treasurer, but from a

NARRATOR:  
(*cont.*)

greater and a richer land. There was better reason than Columbus ever knew for the noble sentences with which, back in Spain, his letter to their Majesties' Treasurer ended.

SOUND:

*A solemn music as in a cathedral of Seville.*

THE ADMIRAL:

Therefore let the King and Queen and our princes and their most happy kingdoms, and all the other provinces of Christendom, render thanks to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who has granted us so great victory and such prosperity. Let processions be made and sacred feasts be held, and the temples be adorned with festive boughs. Let Christ rejoice on earth as he rejoices in heaven in the prospect of the salvation of the souls of so many nations hitherto lost. Let us also rejoice as well on account of the exaltation of our faith, as on account of the increase of our temporal prosperity, of which not only Spain, but all Christendom will be partakers.

SOUND:

*Music and the sea.*

II

THE NAMES FOR THE RIVERS





## THE NAMES FOR THE RIVERS

SOUND:

*The sea shanty of Henry VIII, sung by a single voice, the refrain picked up by several voices, the sound fading out under the voice of the narrator.*

FIRST

NARRATOR:

Learned scholars of Europe have told us again and again that we have not achieved an American literature. But was there not, from the beginning of the New World, an American literature—a literature more certainly American at least than it was anything else?

What, after all, is the literature of a nation or of a continent? Is it a library full of books written by men who were born in a certain place—and if they, why not their fathers, and if their fathers, why not their grandfathers? Does a literature become a literature because of the race or geography of its writers? Or is the literature of a nation or the literature of a continent the words, however written, which are the chronicle of its life: its life inward and its life outward; the life which belongs to it?

But I do not wish to argue with those who make the definitions in these matters. If the

FIRST  
NARRATOR:  
(*cont.*)

texts of the American discovery are not ours as literature, if they belong as literature to the Genoese because Columbus was Genoese, and as literature to the French because Cartier was a Frenchman, and as literature to the English because Captain Gosnold and William Strachey were Englishmen, then so much the worse for literature which belongs to an owner like a suit of clothes. If the great American texts are not ours as literature, they are ours as something better. They are ours in deed. They are ours because our past is in them.

SOUND:           *The shanty.*

SECOND  
NARRATOR:

All those who came to this continent in the first years after Columbus giving the names to the high bluffs and the mouths of the rivers, giving the names of their girls to the loveliest islands and the names of the saints' days to the capes and the names of the feasts to the harbors—all of them, whatever tongue they spoke or wrote in, left words behind that are our common language on this continent—Recife, Martha's Vineyard, Belle Isle, Florida, Marblehead, Cape Fear, Tierra del Fuego, Baton Rouge, Río de la Plata, Rio de Janeiro—

SOUND:           *The shanty as from a distance.*

VOICE:           This headland, therefore, they called Cape Cod, from whence they sayled round about the same almost all the points of the com-

passe, the shoare very bold; at length they came amongst many faier islands, three especially, all lying within a league or two of one another and not above six or seven leagues from the mayne; the one whereof Captain Gosnold called Martha's Viniard, being stored with such an incredible nombre of vynes, as well in the woody parte of the island, where they runne upon every tree, as on the outward parts, that they could not goe for treading upon them.

SECOND  
NARRATOR:

In the Old World the monuments were towers and churches and statues of kings and inscriptions on triumphal arches and the marble of tombs. In the New World they were names. The flags of the explorers nailed to the poles on the headlands ravelled away, and the wooden crosses rotted in rain and fell, and the silver shilling set in the brass plate with the claim of discovery vanished, and the sailors themselves were buried in sand or at sea and their ships were forgotten and they themselves were forgotten, but the names they gave to the bluffs and the capes and the islands were left behind to remember them—to remember at least what tongue they spoke or from what country they came—

SOUND:

*A French shanty, "Compagnon Marinier."*

VOICE:

And killed more than a thousand murrees and great auks of which we took away as many as we wished in our longboats. You could have

VOICE: loaded in an hour thirty such longboats. We  
(*cont.*) named these islands, Isles des Margaulx, the Gannet islands.

SOUND: *A Spanish sea song.*

VOICE: They continued navigating along the coast until the 21st day of the same month, October, when they discovered a cape to which they gave the name of Cabo de las Virgenes, the Cape of the Virgins, because they sighted it on the day of the eleven thousand virgins; it is in fifty-two degrees, a little more or a little less.

SECOND NARRATOR: The name of Cabo de las Virgenes is a monument which means to all who hear it: The Spaniards were first at this place. And so for the rest of the names of the discoveries . . . Isle des Margaulx: The French found this island . . . Cape Cod: Here there were Englishmen . . . Sandy Hook: In this harbor the Dutch anchored . . . Monte Pascoal—Mountain of Easter: The Portuguese passed here.

SOUND: *The shanty.*

VOICE: We followed our route over this sea until Tuesday, the Octave of Easter, which was the 21st of April, when we came upon some signs of land. And on the following Wednesday, at the vesper hours, we caught sight of land, that is, first of a large mountain very high and

round and of other lower lands to the south of it, and of flat land with great groves of trees. To this high mountain, the Captain gave the name of Monte Pascoal.

SOUND:

*A Portuguese song: "A Vida do Marujo."*

VOICE:

And sailed along the coast 378 miles north-west by west where we found ourselves in a strait, to which we gave the name Estrecho de Victoria, Strait of Victoria, because the ship *Victoria* was the first that had seen it; some called it Estrecho de Magallanes, the Strait of Magellan, because our captain was named Fernando Magellan.

SECOND

NARRATOR:

Captain Gosnold, who gave Cape Cod its name, and Jacques Cartier, who sent his longboats ashore on the Islands he called the Gannet Islands, and Pedro Vaz de Caminha, who wrote King Manoel of Portugal of the discovery of the Mountain of Easter and the coast of Brazil, and the famous Portuguese admiral who sailed for the King of Spain through the narrow waters that "some call the Strait of Magellan"—all of them, Gosnold, Cartier, Magellan, Pedro Paz, have been dead for centuries, but the words they used are words still on this continent.

The names of the American continent are names in the five languages, and more than five, for the Indians left their words on the coasts also—Hatteras, Pernambuco, Mon-

SECOND  
NARRATOR:  
(*cont.*)

tauk, Mexico, Guayaquil. But for all the difference of tongues, the story is one story. The English and Dutch and Spanish and French and Portuguese who followed the long American coast, feeling the bays out, trying the rivers, taking their soundings in the gulfs and inlets—all the discoverers of whatever tongue—made of their names, or the names of their ships, or the names they imagined, words in one history.

Newfoundland—the new found land—was such a name. The first letter written in English from this continent was written by John Rut to Henry the Eighth from the waters off Newfoundland. “Bad English and worse writing,” Purchas said of it a hundred years later—but “bad English” such as the best of English writers might be proud of, for it still speaks, indeed it sings, after four centuries:

These are the words of John Rut, Master of the *Mary of Guildford*, which sailed from Plymouth the tenth June, 1527, and the ship *Sampson* was with her and she lost sight of the *Sampson* in a great gale on July first of the same year but the *Mary of Guildford* came to the new found land.

JOHN RUT:

And if it please your honorable Grace, we ranne in our course to the Northward, till we came into fifty-three degrees, and there we found many great Ilands of Ice and deepe water, we found no sounding, and then we durst not goe no further to the Northward for

feare of more Ice, and then we cast about to the Southward, and within foure dayes after we had one hundred and sixtie fathom, and then wee came into fifty-two degrees, and fell with the mayne Land, and within ten leagues of the mayne Land we met with a great Iland of Ice, and came hard by her, for it was standing in deepe water, and so went in with Cape de Bas, a good Harbor, and many small Ilands, and a great fresh River going up farre into the mayne land, and the mayne Land all wildernesses and mountaines and woods, and no naturall ground but all mosse, and no inhabitation nor no people in these parts; and in the woods we found footing of divers great beasts, but we saw none not in ten leagues. And please your Grace, the *Sampson* and wee kept company all the way till within two dayes before wee met with all the Ilands of Ice. That was the first day of Iuly at night, and there rose a great and a maruailous great storme, and much foule weather; I trust in Almighty Iesu to heare good newes of her.

SECOND  
NARRATOR:

There was no word of the *Sampson* then nor has ever been but the new found land with its "many small Ilands" and its "mayne Land all wildernesses and mountaines and woods, and no naturall ground but all mosse, and no inhabitation nor no people," is remembered in a word that time has smoothed and rounded but not changed. And there are many names that speak as clear as Newfoundland along the American coast from the silence of ice at the

SECOND  
NARRATOR:  
(*cont.*)

extreme north to the ocean of silence at the south. There is Frobisher's name to speak for the early puzzled years of the discovery when every bay or gulf or inlet on the coast was a possible opening to the South Sea and Cipango and Cathay, and the ships pushed in by winding channels or the fissures of the ice.

VOICE:

This place he named after his name, Frobisher's Streytes, lyke as Magellanns at the south-weste ende of the worlde having discovered the passage to the South Sea, and called the same straites Magellanns streightes. After he hadde passed sixty leagues into this foresayde straye hee wente ashore and founde signe where fire had been made.

SECOND  
NARRATOR:

So Frobisher in 1576 at the northwest end of the world on the disastrous voyage from which he brought back, not the discovery of a passage to the Indies, but a single Esquimeau, captured by the lure of a hawk's bell, who bit his tongue in two in his anger and died of the cold at sea—Frobisher who "wente ashore and founde signe where fire had been made"—the dead ash on the frozen ground.

Cold or heat, the voyagers of that century pushed on along the slowly opening coasts, turning the headlands, entering the shallow coves, tracing the shores upon their charts, running their ships aground sometimes and pushing on in the small boats as Cabeza de Vaca did on the Florida coast in 1528.



VOICE:

Again we began to move along the coast in the direction of the River Palmas, our hunger and thirst continually increasing; for our scant subsistence was getting near the end, the water was out, and the bottles made from the legs of horses, having soon rotted, were useless. Sometimes we entered coves and creeks that lay far in, and found them all shallow and dangerous. Thus we journeyed along them thirty days.

SECOND  
NARRATOR:

Sometimes the coves and creeks were shallow and sometimes the deep water led far into the land as it did for the English Captain Waymouth on the coast of Maine in 1603 where the salt water follows the creeks still, and the ships tie up to the foot of the hay meadows and the apple orchards come down to the edge of the sea.

VOICE:

Besides the bordering land is a most rich neighbor trending all along on both sides and in equall plaine, neither mountainous nor rocky but verged with a green bordure of grasse. The wood she beareth is not shrubbish fit only for fewell; but goodly tall Firre, Spruce, Birch, Beech, Oke, which in many places is not so thicke, but may with small labour be made feeding ground, being plentiful like the outward Ilands with fresh water which streameth down in many places.

SECOND  
NARRATOR:

That was a river on the coast of Maine, perhaps St. George's River. And this is the

SECOND  
NARRATOR:  
(*cont.*)

Orinoco on the Guiana coast and the words are the words of Sir Walter Raleigh in his *Discovery*. It was in 1595 he made this journey.

VOICE:

On both sides of this river, we passed the most beautifull countrey that ever mine eyes beheld: and whereas all that we had seene before was nothing but woods, prickles, bushes and thornes, here we beheld plaines of twenty miles in length, the grasse short and greene, and in divers parts groves of trees by themselves, as if they had beene by all the arte and labour in the world so made of purpose: and still as we rowed, the deere came downe feeding by the waters side, as if they had beene used to a keepers call. Upon this river there were great store of many fowle, and of many sorts. . . .

When it grew toward sunneset we entred a branch of a river that fell into Orenoque called Winicapora: where I was informed of the mountains of Christall, to which in trueth for the length of the way, and the evill season of the yeere, I was not able to march, nor abide any longer upon the journey: wee saw it afarre off and it appeared like a white Church-tower of exceeding height. There falleth over it a mighty river which toucheth no part of the side of the mountaine, but rusheth over the toppe of it, and falleth to the ground with so terrible a noyse and clamour, as if a thousand great bels were knockt one against

another. I thinke there is not in the world so strange an over-fall, nor so wonderfull to behold.

SECOND  
NARRATOR:

This story of the searching out of the continent by the rivers and the gulfs and the channels, from the Strait of Magellan on the south, to Frobisher's Strait on the north, is a story told in a page here and a chapter there, a letter from one man, a log from another, a relation from a third. Here for example is the log kept by Hudson's mate on the Dutch voyage that gave the discoverer's name to his famous river.

THE MATE:

So we weighed and went in and rode in five fathoms, ooze ground and saw many mullets and rays, very great.

SECOND  
NARRATOR:

It is the late summer of 1609. They are off Sandy Hook, having come there by Newfoundland and Maine and Cape Cod and the Carolinas and back north up the Jersey coast. It is very hot. There are thunderheads over the dark oaks on the shore.

THE MATE:

This day the people of the country came aboard of us, seeming very glad of our coming and brought green tobacco and gave us of it for knives and beads. They go in deer skins loose, well dressed. They have yellow copper. They have great store of maize or Indian wheat whereof they make good bread. The country is full of great and tall oaks.

SECOND  
NARRATOR:

They were there in the Lower Bay for seven days and they lost one man, an Englishman, John Colman, who was shot in the throat with an arrow and they named the point after him, Colman's Point. And on the tenth of September they left the Lower Bay, feeling their way up with the leads.

THE MATE:

Then we weighed and went over and found it shoal all the middle of the river for we could find but two fathoms and a half and three fathoms for the space of a league; then we came to three fathoms and four fathoms and so to seven fathoms and anchored and rode all night in soft oozy ground. The bank is sand.

SECOND  
NARRATOR:

They passed the lower end of the island of Manhattan and entered the river which was to bear the Captain's name. That was the tenth.

THE MATE:

Was fair and very hot weather. At one o'clock in the afternoon we weighed and went into the river, the wind at south-south-west, little wind. Our soundings were seven, six, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, twelve, thirteen and fourteen fathoms. Then it shoaled again and came to five fathoms. Then we anchored and saw that it was a very good harbor for all winds and rode all night. The people of the country came aboard of us, making show of love.

SECOND  
NARRATOR:

The measurements of the continent were taken in fathoms by the lead, and in leagues by the course, and in degrees by the compass and the stars; and the names were put to the hills and the bays and the islands. Those who know how to read the marks men leave behind them in the air and on the earth can almost read the history of those voyages in the words they left behind. But there were some too—and not the least—of the discoverers, who left no names upon the maps to show their journeys. There was Captain Francisco de Orellana for one, who first descended the Amazon. Of his journey, which must be accounted one of the most dangerous ever made by men, there is the narrative of the Friar Gaspar de Carvajal—"a devout and reverend father of the Order of Preaching Friars," as he called himself. But the river does not bear the name of Orellana.

CARVAJAL:

On New Year's Day, it seemed to certain of the companions who were going along in one of the canoes that they heard drums, and this was announced among them all and some said that it was true and others said that they could not hear it but they were happier over the new hope notwithstanding.

SECOND  
NARRATOR:

So Carvajal in his account of the voyage. They had seen no living thing but the strange birds and the unfamiliar animals for many days and the food was finished.

CARVAJAL:

We were eating leather from the seats and bows of the saddles and the hide covering and the hampers in which we carried the little we had for clothing and even the soles of our shoes, so we were driven by hunger.

SECOND

NARRATOR:

They had set out from Quito under Gonzalo Pizarro, brother of the Marquis, to search for gold and cinnamon in the Peruvian provinces to the east around the fabulous lake of El Dorado, and they had crossed the great wall of the Andes and come down on the eastern side and discovered a river with houses built to the edge of the water and many canoes and Indians and there they had built a brigantine and had taken ship and descended the river until they came to an uninhabited vast and marshy forest where no food was found and Pizarro sent Orellana on ahead to find out the country and return if he could with food, and Orellana took fifty men, the Friar among them, and went on down the unknown river through the forest without food or Indians till their hunger drove them to eat the hides from the saddles.

SOUND:

*Indian drums at a distance.*

CARVAJAL:

And as God our Lord is the father of mercy and of all consolation it being Monday evening this being the eighth day that we had been journeying on while we were eating inasmuch as we now had nothing left to eat but a little wheat and flour which I had brought along

for the sacraments, Indian drums were heard very plainly and in our estimation they were five or six leagues away from where we were.

SOUND:

*The drums louder.*

SECOND

NARRATOR:

And so they came to a village where there was maize and cured fish and the red dwarf pepper of the Indians. But when Orellana would have loaded the brigantine and the canoes to return to Pizarro and the rest his men refused, saying that they could not go up against the current of the river even without mischance in less than forty or fifty days and Pizarro, having no food nor the means of securing any, would before that have returned to Peru (which in truth he did but with great hardship, eating the horses).

CARVAJAL:

And as it was not possible for us to escape alive except by continuing on our way and in the direction of the Northern Sea, setting out to find it down the river, all of the companions acquiesced in this decision and that a brigantine should be built for this purpose large enough to carry thirty men.

SECOND

NARRATOR:

Even today, with much knowledge of the country and the river, it is a dangerous and difficult thing to cross the Andes from the west and descend the Amazon from its beginnings to the sea. For Orellana and his companions, knowing no more of that river than the direction of its current, building their

SECOND  
NARRATOR:  
(*cont.*)

ship, as Carvajal says, with "no craftsmen who were expert in this or that trade," so that "some were engaged in making charcoal in spite of their not being charcoal burners, others in cutting and bringing in wood in spite of their not being woodcutters, others making nails in spite of their not being smiths"—for Orellana and his companions it was the desperate journey of men who could not return and had no other choice but to go on as the river carried them.

CARVAJAL:

I say that we departed from this stopping place on the feast day of the Purification of Our Lady which by another name they call Candlemas on the first day of February of the year One Thousand Five Hundred and Forty-two. As we had no pilot, nor had any Christians ever made that journey, nor had there ever existed a navigator's chart with a description covering that part of the world, it was necessary not to push on during the night inasmuch as even by day the journey was concealed from us.

SECOND  
NARRATOR:

Nevertheless they descended the greatest river of the earth past the uninhabited jungles and past the towns and the settlements of the Indians where the torches showed by night across the water and the roofs were visible by day and the cultivated lands appeared and the orchards. In one place they built a second ship and in another they fought and many were killed and the



Friar Gaspar de Carvajal was wounded in one eye and lost the sight of it and they came at last to the lift of the salt water a hundred leagues from the sea and after that to the sea and the island of Margarita, and Orellana went back to Spain and got himself a king's commission to conquer the country with the title of Adelantado and so returned and went up the river a great way to a settlement "which is on the right as one proceeds up the river" and there he died.

SOUND:

*The Indian drums far off and fading.*

SECOND

NARRATOR:

The continent was named in the five tongues—Baton Rouge for the cypress by the river, San Salvador for the gratitude and the humility, Rio de Janeiro, River of January, for the day of the landfall; Martha's Vineyard for a girl and the grapes; Colman's Point for a dead man with an arrow in his throat; Spuyten Duyvil for a villainous swift current.

The continent was named in the five tongues and the shape of the land was drawn on the secret charts; and the letters, the log-books, the relations were sent to the bishops and the kings and the pages were scattered over Europe, but the land has brought them together again notwithstanding. And this that Sir Walter Raleigh sent from Guiana by a Gentleman of his fleet to a most especial friend of his in London may speak at the end for them all.

RALEIGH:

This Empire is that rich Magazany which yet had her Maidenhead never sackt, turn'd nor wrought, the face of the earth hath not beene turn'd nor the vertue and salt of the soyle spent by manurance. The graves have not been opened for gold, the mines not broken with the sledge or pickaxe, nor their Images puld downe out of their Temples.

SECOND

NARRATOR:

Such was the New World.

III

THE AMERICAN NAME



## THE AMERICAN NAME

SOUND: *A flurry of dry, wry, ironic music: half noble, half mocking.*

NARRATOR: As is universally known, the new-found continents were named, about the year 1507 or shortly thereafter, for Amerigo Vespucci. . . .

A VOICE:  
(*conversational*) Why?

NARRATOR: . . . for Amerigo Vespucci, a Florentine . . .

THE VOICE:  
(*gently*) A liar.

NARRATOR: . . . a Florentine, the third son of a notary . . .

THE VOICE: The third son of a liar.

NARRATOR: . . . who was born March ninth, 1451, was a merchant in Florence, a representative in Cadiz of the great banking and trading house of the Medici . . .

THE VOICE: And a liar. In Cadiz as in Florence.

NARRATOR: . . . a provision contractor to the fleets out of that port for some years. Sailed from Cadiz tenth May, 1497 . . .

THE VOICE: Or was it 1499? Or did he sail?

NARRATOR: . . . proceeded to the Grand Canary, thence for thirty-seven days on a west-south-west course for a thousand leagues till they found the coast of the mainland in latitude sixteen degrees north and longitude from the Canaries, seventy degrees west . . .

THE VOICE: *Found* the coast? Did Amerigo find it? Hadn't the Admiral found it? In 1497? The mainland?

NARRATOR: . . . returned from this voyage. Sailed again May sixteenth, 1499; returned; sailed again March tenth, 1501; returned; sailed for the fourth time, May tenth, 1503 . . .

THE VOICE: As he avers, avows, avouches, asseverates, asserts, protests, declaims.

NARRATOR: . . . wrote numerous letters . . .

THE VOICE: Numerous.

NARRATOR: . . . which were widely read . . .

THE VOICE: And widely written, you might say.

NARRATOR: . . . including the famous letter on his Third Voyage to Lorenzo Pietro Francisco de Medici . . .

THE VOICE: To the boss, that is.

NARRATOR: . . . in which he unequivocally asserts that his newly discovered countries are a new world—a *Mundus Novus*—since these countries lie beyond the equinoctial line to the south where the ancients believed there was no land but only sea. "But this their opinion," writes Amerigo, "is false, and entirely opposed to the truth. My last voyage has proved it . . ."

THE VOICE: *His last voyage!*

NARRATOR: ". . . for I have found a continent in that southern part; more populous and more full of animals than our Europe, or Asia, or Africa, and even more temperate and pleasant than any other region known to us, as will be explained . . ."

THE VOICE: As will be explained, without doubt. He was good at explaining.

NARRATOR: . . . which letter, being published in Latin simultaneously in Paris and Florence in the year 1503 under the title *Mundus Novus* and thereafter in High Dutch, Low Dutch, French, Italian and various other tongues, was voraciously read by citizens of all

NARRATOR:  
(*cont.*)

countries and dispositions—so much so that it was shortly thereafter, in 1507, bound up by a printer of Vicenza together with the first three voyages of Columbus and the expeditions of Cabral, Vasco da Gama and various other discoverers and geographers under the title PAESI NOVAMENTE RETROVATI ET NOVO MONDO DA ALBERICO VESPUTIO FLORENTINO INTITULATO.

THE VOICE:

Countries newly discovered and the new world of Amerigo Vespucci called the Florentine! The New World! Discovered by Amerigo! Columbus's landfall—discovered by Amerigo!

NARRATOR:

. . . with the result that various publishers, map-makers and commentators of Europe influenced by this volume or by the letters of Amerigo as otherwise published began to employ the name America in referring to the new-found continent.

THE VOICE:

Why?

(*Pause*)

NARRATOR:

You are very contemptuous of Amerigo Vespucci. Whoever you are.

THE VOICE:  
(*gently*)

Whoever I am. Very contemptuous.

NARRATOR:  
(*hurt*)

His contemporaries, I believe, thought well of Amerigo. Martin Waldseemüller, the eminent



geographer, refers to him as "a man of great ability."

THE VOICE: And who was Martin Waldseemüller? What did he know?

NARRATOR: He published in 1507 the first maps in which the name America was applied to the New World.

THE VOICE: Give any reasons?

NARRATOR: He had explicit reasons. In his *Cosmographiae Introductio* . . .

THE VOICE: Never mind the Latin. What did he say?

NARRATOR: He said this: "Inasmuch as both Europe and Asia received their names from women, I see no reason why anyone should justly object to calling this part Amerige, i.e., the land of Amerigo, or America, after Amerigo, its discoverer, a man of great ability."

THE VOICE: Because Europe and Asia were named after women!

ANOTHER VOICE: He saw no reason!

ANOTHER VOICE: Justly to object!

(Pause)

SOUND:           *A man's laugh; then another's; then another's until there is an indivisible confusion of laughter.*

NARRATOR:       So! There are more of you!

FIRST VOICE:     Many more.

NARRATOR:       And you are all contemptuous of Amerigo Vespucci.

FIRST VOICE:     All of us.

NARRATOR:       Why?

FIRST VOICE:     Because he deserved nothing and pretended much—and was rewarded with a continent. And besides we are tired of the fairy tales and the respectable opinions. We believe in the facts.

NARRATOR:       What was his crime? He went to sea. At fifty. In search of a new world.

FIRST VOICE:     And what's the merit in that?

ANOTHER VOICE:  Anyone can make the second voyage.

NARRATOR:       He was a respectable man.

SOUND:           *Guffaw.*

FIRST VOICE:     Have you witnesses?

- NARRATOR: The Admiral himself—Columbus.
- A VOICE: The Admiral ought to know.
- A VOICE: What has the Admiral got to say of Vespucci?
- NARRATOR: Listen.
- ADMIRAL: He always showed a desire to please me and is  
(*his voice slow and remote and grave*) a very respectable man. Fortune has been adverse to him, as to many others . . . He leaves me with the desire to do me service, if it should be in his power.
- SOUND: *Roar of laughter.*
- FIRST VOICE: To do him service . . . to steal his discovery . . . to pocket his continent . . .
- ANOTHER VOICE: Any more witnesses?
- NARRATOR: There is Peter Martyr who was of Amerigo's nation and lived in the Peninsula while Amerigo was there.
- PETER MARTYR: As we were therefore secretly together in one  
(*a dusty, dry, distant and cracked voice*) chamber we had many instruments partaining to these affaires, as globes, and many of those mappes which are commonly called the shipman's cardes or cardes of the sea. Of the which, one was drawn by the Portugales, whereunto Americus Vesputius is said to have put his hande, being a man most experte in this facultie, and a Florentine borne, who also

PETER MARTYR: under the stipende of the Portugales had  
(*cont.*) sayled toward the South pole many degrees  
beyond the Equinoctiall.

THE VOICE: Made maps! Sailed for the Portuguese!  
(*sing-song*) Crossed the Equator! Got any more? Anyone  
else we can hear from?

NARRATOR: There are, of course, various opinions . . .

FIRST VOICE: None of that. Come out with it. Who have  
you got?

NARRATOR: There was Bartolomé de las Casas, the mis-  
sionary historian.

FIRST VOICE: What did he know of Vespucci?

NARRATOR: He was twenty-five at the time of the voyages.  
He wrote while many men were alive who had  
sailed on them.

FIRST VOICE: Trot him out. Let's hear from him.

LAS CASAS: This fraud or mistake . . .

NARRATOR: As I say, there are various opinions.

FIRST VOICE: Let him talk. Let him talk.

LAS CASAS: . . . whichever it may have been, and the  
(*a man of self- power of writing and narrating well in a good*  
*respect and good style, as well as Americo's silence respecting*  
*humor*) the name of his captain, which was Hojeda,

and his care to mention no one but himself, and his dedication to King René, these things have led foreign writers to name our mainland America as if Americo alone, and not another with him had made the discovery before all others. It is manifest what injustice he did if he intentionally usurped what belonged to another, namely to the Admiral Don Cristobal Colon and with what good reason this discovery, and all its consequences, should belong to the Admiral, after the goodness and providence of God, which chose him for this work. As it belongs more to him, the said continent ought to be called Columba, after Colon, or Columbo, who discovered it, or else "Sancta" or "De Gracia," the names he himself gave it, and not America after Americo.

*(Pause)*

FIRST VOICE: Wait a minute.

ANOTHER VOICE: Sancta! North Sancta! South Sancta!

ANOTHER VOICE: We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of De Gracia in General Congress assembled!

*(Pause)*

FIRST VOICE: Any more witnesses? What's the state of scholarly opinion? What do the modern experts have to say?

NARRATOR: There is Sir Clements Markham, president of the Hakluyt Society a generation ago. The Hakluyt Society is, of course, one of the foremost scientific bodies in the world in its field of discoveries and voyages, and its publications have enriched the literature of our tongue. Also its presidents, and particularly Sir Clements, have been distinguished and eminent authorities. Sir Clements, as of course you know, was perhaps the most effective of the presidents of the Royal Geographic Society.

FIRST VOICE: As of course we know.

SIR CLEMENTS: . . . this . . . beef contractor!  
(*very British*)

FIRST VOICE: Wait a minute. What's the matter with beef?

SOUND: *Uneasy titter of laughter.*

SIR CLEMENTS: He was fond of airing his classical knowledge, though it was a mere smattering, for he thought that Pliny was the contemporary of Maecenas. . . .

FIRST VOICE: Fawncy that!  
(*coarsely*)

SIR CLEMENTS: The evidence against Vespucci is cumulative and quite conclusive. He cannot be acquitted of the intention of appropriating for himself the glory of having first discovered the mainland.

FIRST VOICE: The impostor! Cumulative—did you hear that? And quite conclusive. Blimey!  
(*ironically*)

SOUND: *Murmur of the other voices.*

SIR CLEMENTS: He was certainly not a practical navigator, much less a pilot, as the term was understood in those days. A man of fifty years of age could not go to sea for the first time and be a pilot.

THE VOICE: Why not? Some law against it?

ANOTHER VOICE: Fifty years of age. Brave fella to go to sea at that age in those bathtubs!

ANOTHER VOICE: For the first time!

SOUND: *The voices louder and more hostile.*

SIR CLEMENTS: The tales of Amerigo Vespucci have a place in the history of geographical discovery . . .

FIRST VOICE: Well now, that's white of you!

SIR CLEMENTS: . . . and require, although they do not deserve, serious consideration.

FIRST VOICE: Just like that!

ANOTHER VOICE: Except that they named a continent after him.

ANOTHER VOICE: Or after his tales.

ANOTHER VOICE: What about those tales? Let's have a look at them.

ANOTHER VOICE: They have a place in the history of geographical discovery—haven't they? Or haven't they?  
(*imitating Sir Clements*)

ANOTHER VOICE: They require—*although* they do not deserve, serious consideration.  
(*imitating Sir Clements*)

SOUND: *The voices together in indistinguishable hubbub.*

NARRATOR: Who are you gentlemen—precisely?

(*Pause*)

FIRST VOICE: Precisely!  
(*mocking*)

SOUND: *Guffaw.*

NARRATOR: If it's not too much to ask.

FIRST VOICE: Oh, never too much. Gentlemen, I appeal to you. Who are we?  
(*politely*)

ANOTHER VOICE: Precisely?

SOUND: *Snicker.*

ANOTHER VOICE: Well, you might say . . .

ANOTHER VOICE: Posterity.



ANOTHER VOICE: You might say.

FIRST VOICE: Posterity, precisely. And why, may I ask, do you ask?

NARRATOR: Nothing. You seem to change your minds pretty easily.

SOUND: *Howl of laughter.*

FIRST VOICE: Precisely. We change our minds.

NARRATOR: You were very scornful of Amerigo Vespucci.

SOUND: *Protesting murmur.*

FIRST VOICE: Listen, my friend. We are Americans, aren't we?

ANOTHER VOICE: Anyway we're not Sanctans.

ANOTHER VOICE: Or De Gracians.

ANOTHER VOICE: Or whatever the names were.

FIRST VOICE: There are several hundreds of millions of us who call ourselves Americans. In various languages.

ANOTHER VOICE: And how do you like that?

ANOTHER VOICE: What are you trying to do to us—change us to Sanctans?

ANOTHER VOICE: What do we care if he wasn't a pilot?

ANOTHER VOICE: And what if he was old: men had been old before him.

ANOTHER VOICE: Or got mixed in his dates.

FIRST VOICE: Let's hear from the horse's mouth. Leave out the professors. Leave out the historian-missionaries. Let's hear from Amerigo.

ANOTHER VOICE: Let's hear those tales of Amerigo's.

ANOTHER VOICE: That require, although they do not deserve . . .  
(*ironic*)

ANOTHER VOICE: Serious consideration.  
(*heavily ironic*)

FIRST VOICE: Maybe he didn't discover the New World. At least he recognized it when he saw it.  
(*belligerent*)

ANOTHER VOICE: More than Columbus did.

ANOTHER VOICE: Columbus discovered the Empire of the Great Khan. Including the Ganges.  
(*sneering*)

NARRATOR: A moment ago you were defending Columbus against this impostor as you called him. A little consistency, gentlemen. Bear in mind that it was necessary for Columbus to discover what he had gone out to find. He was a wilful man.

FIRST VOICE: And it was necessary for Amerigo to go out to find what it was that Columbus had discovered.

ANOTHER VOICE: Who's the discoverer of gold—the man who (*triumphantly*) finds it or the man who knows it's gold?

NARRATOR: Did any of them know it was a new world in that century? Did any of the discoverers know it was a new world for new men, for a new beginning of history? Did anyone know that for two hundred years and more afterwards?

SOUND: *Angry, irritated murmur of voices.*

FIRST VOICE: Let's hear Amerigo. Let's hear the tales.

NARRATOR: And how do you find the new worlds anyway? By sailing to them? By crossing the mountains? By descending the rivers? Or perhaps by believing in them?

SOUND: *Angry hum of voices rising.*

NARRATOR: And creating them? . . . I merely ask.

FIRST VOICE: And who are you asking? *We* don't speculate. *We judge.* You do what you can and we tell you how good it was.

ANOTHER VOICE: *We* tell you. Posterity tells you.

FIRST VOICE: Facts! That's what we go for. Give us the facts and we'll tell you the lowdown. Now this Amerigo—

ANOTHER VOICE: Give us the facts on Amerigo.

ANOTHER VOICE: Give us the tales.

ANOTHER VOICE: What did he say?

ANOTHER VOICE: Give us the straight Amerigo.

SOUND: *Jumble of voices.*

NARRATOR: At your service, gentlemen. Amerigo Vespucci. Florentine. Chief Pilot of Spain and of the Ocean Sea.

SOUND: *The flurry of music but without the irony: the same phrase, smooth, glib, voluble.*

AMERIGO: This land is very populous and full of people, with numerous rivers, but few animals.  
(*plausible, smooth, urbane, good-humored*)

FIRST VOICE: That must be him.

AMERIGO: They are similar to ours, except the lions, ounces, stags, pigs, goats and deer; and these still have some differences of form. They have neither horses nor mules, asses nor dogs, nor any kind of sheep, nor cattle. But they have many other animals all wild, and none of them serve for any domestic use, so that they cannot be counted.

FIRST VOICE: Knows what he's talking about.

ANOTHER VOICE: Must have been there.

AMERIGO: What shall we say of the birds, which are so many, and of so many kinds and colours of plumage that it is wonderful to see them? The land is very pleasant and fruitful, full of very large woods and forests, and it is always green, for the trees never shed their leaves. The fruits are so numerous that they cannot be enumerated, and all different from ours.

FIRST VOICE: Very informative.

ANOTHER VOICE: Very.

ANOTHER VOICE: Instructive. Decidedly.

AMERIGO: Many people came to see us and were astonished at our appearance and the whiteness of our skins. They asked whence we came, and we gave them to understand that we came from heaven, and that we were travelling to see the world and they believed it. In this land we put up a font of baptism and an infinite number of people were baptised, and they called us, in their language, *Carabi*, which is as much as to say, "men of great wisdom."

FIRST VOICE: Wait a minute. How did he know their language?

ANOTHER VOICE: How long was he there?

ANOTHER VOICE: Who wrote the dictionary?

**NARRATOR:** Possibly a slight error of identification. Carib was their name for themselves. They were Carib Indians. The discoverer may have misunderstood the reference. Such things happen from time to time in the historical sciences. Let us continue with Amerigo's narrative.

**AMERIGO:** What we knew of their life and their customs was that they all go naked, as well the men as the women, without covering anything. They are of medium stature and very well proportioned. The color of their skins inclines to red, like the skin of a lion, and I believe that, if they were properly clothed, they would be white like ourselves.

**FIRST VOICE:** He has a right to believe it.

**ANOTHER VOICE:** A natural assumption.

**ANOTHER VOICE:** Perfectly.

**AMERIGO:** They have no hair whatever on their bodies, but they have very long black hair, especially the women, which beautifies them. They have not very beautiful faces because they have long eyelids which make them look like Tartars. They do not allow any hairs to grow on their eyebrows, nor eyelashes. They are very agile in their persons, both in walking and running, as well the men as the women. They swim wonderfully well, and the women better than the men; for we have found and seen them many times two leagues at sea, without any help whatever in swimming.

FIRST VOICE: Not impossible.

ANOTHER VOICE: Two leagues. Six miles . . .

AMERIGO: They have neither king nor lord nor do they obey anyone but live in freedom. . . . Neither the mother nor the father chastise their children and it is wonderful that we never saw a quarrel among them. They show themselves simple in their talk. Their mode of life is very barbarous for they have no regular time for their meals, but they eat at any time that they have the wish, as often at night as in the day. They sleep in certain very large nets made of cotton and suspended in the air; and if this should seem a bad way of sleeping, I say that it is pleasant to sleep in that manner.

FIRST VOICE: Hammocks!

ANOTHER VOICE: Hammocks obviously.

ANOTHER VOICE: If he saw hammocks, he was there.

AMERIGO: They are a people of cleanly habits as regards their bodies, and are constantly washing themselves. They do not practice matrimony among them, each man taking as many women as he likes and when he is tired of a woman he repudiates her without either injury to himself or shame to the woman, for in this matter the woman has the same liberty as the man.

FIRST VOICE: He was there, without question.

AMERIGO: We did not find that these people had any laws; they cannot be called Moors nor Jews, but worse than Gentiles. I judge their lives to be Epicurean. They have no sowing of grain nor of any kind of corn. They eat little flesh, unless it be human flesh, and your Magnificence must know that they are so inhuman as to transgress regarding this most bestial custom. . . .

FIRST VOICE: A cautious and exact historian.

ANOTHER VOICE: Restrained and observant.

AMERIGO: You may be the more certain of this because I have seen a man eat his children and wife and I knew a man who was popularly credited to have eaten three hundred human bodies.

ANOTHER VOICE: Three hundred hu—

ANOTHER VOICE: Three hundred . . .

FIRST VOICE: It is mathematically possible. Besides he does not say he saw it. "Popularly credited," he says.

AMERIGO: I was once in a certain city for twenty-seven days where human flesh was hung up near the houses in the same way as we expose butcher's meat.

*(Pause)*



FIRST VOICE: Twenty-seven days is precise.

ANOTHER VOICE: Not four weeks. Not a month. Twenty-seven days. No more. No less.

ANOTHER VOICE: Butcher's meat!  
(*cautiously*)

AMERIGO: They live for a hundred and fifty years and  
are rarely sick.

(*Pause*)

FIRST VOICE: One hundred and fifty years . . .  
(*reflectively*)

ANOTHER VOICE: Is precise!

ANOTHER VOICE: Now wait a minute.

ANOTHER VOICE: Give him a chance.

ANOTHER VOICE: Not one century. Not two. A hundred and  
fifty years. . . .

AMERIGO: I believe this is because a southerly wind is  
always blowing.

FIRST VOICE: He believes this is because a southerly wind is  
always blowing!  
(*with gathering emphasis*)

ANOTHER VOICE: *He* believes it.

ANOTHER VOICE: He has a right to believe it.

ANOTHER VOICE: He has a right to believe in the south wind if he wants to.

ANOTHER VOICE: The south wind!  
(*scornfully*)

SOUND: *Wrangle of unintelligible voices.*

AMERIGO: There are many kinds of wild animals, principally lions and bears, innumerable serpents and other horrible creatures and deformed beasts.

FIRST VOICE: Deformed beasts!  
(*indignantly*)

ANOTHER VOICE: He means iguanas.

ANOTHER VOICE: He means old wives' tales.

FIRST VOICE: Horrible creatures and deformed beasts!

SOUND: *The wrangle of unintelligible voices louder than before. It continues under what follows.*

AMERIGO: No kind of metal has been found except gold, in which the country abounds. . . .

FIRST VOICE: Runs with it!

ANOTHER VOICE: Gold everywhere!

ANOTHER VOICE: Why not? There was gold!

AMERIGO: . . . though we have brought none back in this our first navigation.

- SOUND:           *Guffaw of laughter.*
- FIRST VOICE:    A probable story!
- ANOTHER VOICE: Gold everywhere underfoot but they couldn't be bothered.
- ANOTHER VOICE: There *could* be gold underground.
- ANOTHER VOICE: There *was* gold underground.
- SOUND:           *The wrangle of voices louder and more violent.*
- AMERIGO:        If the terrestrial paradise is in some part of this land it cannot be very far from the coast we visited.
- FIRST VOICE:    The terrestrial paradise!
- ANOTHER VOICE: The south wind!
- ANOTHER VOICE: And they live for a hundred and fifty years!
- SOUND:           *The wrangling voices drown out the words.*
- NARRATOR:       Gentlemen! Gentlemen!
- SOUND:           *The voices die down.*
- NARRATOR:       Well, gentlemen! What is the verdict of posterity? What is the verdict of posterity on Amerigo Vespucci?
- FIRST VOICE:    A liar and the third son of a liar. . . .

ANOTHER VOICE: An observant and courageous discoverer. . . .

ANOTHER VOICE: A lively and intelligent writer. . . .

ANOTHER VOICE: A thief of other men's reputations. . . .

ANOTHER VOICE: In any event he was there. He saw the hammocks.

ANOTHER VOICE: He wasn't.

ANOTHER VOICE: He was.

SOUND: *The voices rise to a crescendo of wrangling, jangling, violence, ending in the phrase of music clear, suave and mocking—but mocking whom?*

NARRATOR: Of Amerigo Vespucci . . .  
(*resuming his formality*)

SOUND: *The phrase of music.*

NARRATOR: For whom the New World was named . . .

SOUND: *The phrase of music.*

NARRATOR: America!  
(*very simply*)

SOUND: *The voices fade out. The music fades. There is silence.*

SECOND NARRATOR: The truth about Amerigo Vespucci, I suppose, is this—that the truth doesn't very much

matter. If Amerigo was a liar—if he made but one voyage to the New World—if, indeed, he made none—the result would still be the same. The continent would be called America, notwithstanding. For the word America, whatever it may have been by origin, is not now the name of Amerigo Vespucci. It is something very different. It is the name of the human expectation which men associate with a new world. But a new world in a very different sense from the Novo Mondo, the new world, of the little printer in Vicenza who bound up Amerigo's letter in a famous book, *Cosmographiae*, now in the Library of Congress. The new world of that famous book was a world new only on the charts of the seamen. The new world which men have in mind when they speak of America is a world new in its human possibilities—a world in which humanity is newly possible. It was not Amerigo or any of the explorers by sea, even Columbus, who discovered that world. It was discovered by later travellers on other journeys. But there are millions of Americans, nevertheless, who have seen it and who mean to live in it one day.



IV

THE DISCOVERED





## THE DISCOVERED

SOUND:

*A clashing of metal and braying of trumpets and howling of dogs heard as though at a great distance, over many centuries of time. It continues under what follows.*

GARCILASSO  
DE LA VEGA:

They reckoned the months by the moons, from one new moon to another. . . .

They detested the house where a thunderbolt had fallen. They closed the door of such a house with mud and stones that no one might enter it. . . .

In great terror, when an eclipse of the moon began, they sounded trumpets, horns and drums and all other instruments they possessed, so as to make a great noise. They tied up all the dogs, both large and small, and gave them many blows to make them call and yell to the moon, for according to a certain fable they recount, the moon was fond of dogs owing to a service they had done her.

NARRATOR:

But men in Europe, facing the same moon low in their west, low among the cypress trees of their gardens or over their tiled roofs, did not hear the sound. Men in Europe and men in

NARRATOR:  
(*cont.*)

Cuzco, thinking themselves alone on their continents under the night sky surrounded by silence—men in Europe and men in America had watched the same moon together over centuries in ignorance of each other's eyes.

SOUND:

*An Ynca flute alone and without any other sound as though it were played in the moonlight from a housetop of that ancient city. It stops and there is silence.*

NARRATOR:

This is about the men in Cuzco who watched the moon come up across the Andes and did not know that there were other eyes than theirs that met their eyes upon her stained and silver face. This is about the men in all the stone cities and the skin houses and the bark huts from one end of America to the other end, who were there before the "discoverers"—who saw the ships off shore or heard the stories of their coming—who saw the riders in metal on the bare-foot paths or heard the reports of their arms and horses.

This is about the city and the empire of the Yncas as the one man who knew that city and could tell of it has set it down—the one man who knew it as an Ynca and was able to write of it as a Spaniard—the Ynca Garcilasso de la Vega, grand-nephew of the great Ynca Huaiyna Ccápac and son of a Spanish Conquistador, who was born in Cuzco in Peru, reared in the shadow of the Temple of the Sun and educated as a Spanish noble-

man—"an Indian," as he says of himself "born amongst the Indians, and brought up amidst horses and arms"—a mestizo or half breed, proud of the two bloods in his vein and not least of his mother's, for the word *mestizo*, he says, "means that we are a mixture of both nations . . . and being a name given by our parents, I call myself by it with open mouth and pride myself upon it." The Ynca Garcilasso de la Vega was the first man of the New World to speak of it in terms and language the Old World could understand.

Having gone to Spain at the age of twenty after the death of his father, and having fought under Philip II and Don John of Austria in their wars, and having returned, poor and in debt, to hired lodgings in the old city of Cordova, he wrote, in his last years, a book which must be accounted one of the greatest American documents and one of the greatest documents also of the world—the "Royal Commentaries of the Yncas."

SOUND:

*The flute.*

NARRATOR:

What the Ynca Garcilasso remembered in his lodgings in Cordova was the city of his youth, the royal city of the Yncas, a city of stone but without wheels or iron hoofs or hard leather, city of many people, of scuffling feet, of pipe voices. In the city of Cuzco in the ancient evenings there was a hush and murmur of men against stone and the hollow answer of

NARRATOR:  
(*cont.*)

stone to the human presence. There were pipes over the roofs far off; first one, then another answering, then another. Then a man's voice singing.

MAN'S VOICE:

Caylla lapi  
Puñunqui  
Chaupi tuta  
Hamusac . . .

SOUND:

*A flute picks up the melody of the song casually and carelessly. Another answers. There is a ripple of soft women's laughter. Men's voices call words to each other, indistinguishable but with the Ynca sound. The sound goes on under the narrator's voice.*

NARRATOR:

The Ynca Garcilasso says the words of the song mean:

This song of mine  
Will bring you sleep.  
When the night is deep  
I will come to you.

The Ynca Garcilasso says that each tune had its words in Cuzco before the Spaniards came and everyone knew them so that a man might be said to talk to the whole world with his pipe because the tune he played had only one meaning to anyone who heard him.

MAN'S VOICE:

Caylla lapi  
Puñunqui  
Chaupi tuta  
Hamusac . . .

SOUND: *The mocking flute far off over the roofs. The soft, gentle laughter: the voices.*

NARRATOR: The Ynca Garcilasso remembered that there was a Spaniard after the Conquest who met an Indian girl he knew on the streets of the city and asked her to go with him to his lodging. There was a pipe playing and she would not go. "Know you not," she said, "that that flute is calling me with much love and tenderness, so that it obliges me to go toward it? I cannot help going for love drags me to where the flute-player will be my husband, and I his wife."

SOUND: *The flutes. One—another—a third.*

NARRATOR: This was the city of Cuzco, the capital of the Yncas, in the years the Ynca Garcilasso remembered, and the years before that of which his mother's brother told him in the long evenings of his boyhood.

GARCILASSO: In my time the Spaniards opened a street which divided the schools from the palace called Cassana. I saw the walls which were of masonry beautifully cut, showing that they had belonged to royal dwellings. Here also was a most splendid hall which, in the time of the Yncas, was used for the celebration of the festivals in rainy weather.

SOUND: *A great solemn chorus of men's voices singing as though in a hall of stone and at a distance. A drum under.*

MEN'S VOICES: Sun : Moon  
Day : Night  
Summer: Winter  
To their destined  
Places marching . . .

GARCILASSO: In front of their royal palaces was the principal square of the city called Huacay-Pata, which means the terrace for enjoyment and delight. From north to south it is about two hundred paces and from east to west as far as the stream, one hundred and fifty paces. At the north end of the square there were other palaces. . . . I remember, among these buildings, a great hall. . . . I remember also a very beautiful round tower which stood in the square. . . .

SOUND: *The voices under what follows.*

NARRATOR: We speak of the discovery of America, thinking of Columbus sailing westward through the promises and portents, or thinking of Fro-bisher and Magellan at the two ends of the endless line of surf, trying the bays and inlets for the passage to Cathay, or of Cabot or Cartier or Thorfinn on the northeast coast. But in one sense America was no more discovered by these men than China was discovered by Marco Polo or Europe by the first Mongolian horseman to cross the Carpathians. There were men before the discoverers in those countries, and in America also

there were men, and festivals and palaces and cities made of stone and gold.

MEN'S VOICES: Sun : Moon  
Day : Night  
Summer: Winter  
In their order  
O Creator!  
To their destined  
Places marching.  
Hear me! Choose me!  
Let me know thee  
Though my eyes are  
Blind that see thee. . . .

NARRATOR: There were temples to the Sun of which the stones still stand as marvels of workmanship, though the metal and the emeralds—the chairs of gold and the gardens made of gold and silver in the shape of grain and serpents and the butterflies—have vanished.

GARCILASSO: That garden which now supplies the convent with vegetables was in the time of the Yncas a garden made of gold and silver such as they had also in the royal palaces. It contained many herbs and flowers of different kinds, many small plants, many large trees, many large and small animals both wild and domestic, and creeping things such as serpents, lizards and toads, as well as shells, butterflies and birds. Each of these things was placed in its natural position. There was also a large field of maize, the grain they call quinoa,

GARCILASSO:  
(*cont.*)

pulses, and fruit trees with their fruit, all made of gold and silver . . . all for the ornamenting and majesty of the house of the Sun their god.

NARRATOR:

These fruit trees of gold and silver with their golden fruit, and this great field of maize with the silver leaves and the ears of gold had stood in the garden of the temple for how many years, unknown to any man in Europe—even the mountains over the roofs unknown, and even the earth, or even that there was an earth there! For three hundred and fifty years—through the Fifteenth Century, and the Fourteenth Century, and the Thirteenth Century and into the Twelfth—almost as far back as the Norman Conquest of England—the Yncas had ruled their city of Cuzco and the empire that increased around it.

MEN'S VOICES:

Sun : Moon  
Day : Night  
Summer : Winter  
In their order:  
To their destined  
Places marching. . . .

NARRATOR:

Garcilasso de la Vega was indeed, as he says, "a mixture of both nations," when he spoke of these things. The great Temple of the Sun at Cuzco he saw at once as a Spaniard, comparing the golden figures with the altar and the paintings of a Spanish church, and as an



Ynca, as an Indian, proud of the golden image and the single worship of the Sun.

GARCILASSO:

All the four walls of the temple were covered, from roof to floor, with plates and slabs of gold. In the side where we should look to find the high altar, they placed a figure of the Sun made of a plate of gold of a thickness double that of the other plates that covered the walls. The figure was made with a circular face and rays of fire issuing from it, all of one piece, just as the Sun is represented by painters. It was so large as to fill the whole of one side of the temple from one wall to the other. The Yncas had no other idols in that temple save the image of the Sun because they worshipped no other.

MEN'S VOICES

Let me know thee  
Though my eyes are  
Blind that see thee,  
O Creator.

SOUND:

*The solemn voices continue under what follows.*

GARCILASSO:

On either side of the image of the Sun were the bodies of the dead kings, arranged according to precedence, as children of that Sun, and embalmed so as to appear as if they were alive, although the process is not known. They were seated on chairs of gold, placed upon the golden slabs on which they had been used to sit. Their faces were toward the city except

GARCILASSO:  
(*cont.*)

that of Huaiyna Ccápac which was placed facing the figure of the Sun, as the most beloved of his children.

NARRATOR:

Garcilasso says that in the year 1559, which was the year before he left Peru, "the *ficentiate* Polo" discovered five of the bodies, three of the kings and two of the queens, which the Indians had been able, as he says, to hide "with the rest of the treasure." One was the Ynca Huira Ccocha whose hair, it was said, was altogether white.

GARCILASSO:

Against the walls of these temples looking towards the cloister, on the outside, there were four porches of masonry. . . . The mouldings around the corners and all along the inner parts of the porches were inlaid with plates of gold as well as the walls and even the floors. At the corners of the mouldings there were many settings of fine stones, emeralds, and turquoises, but there were neither diamonds nor rubies in that land. The Ynca sat in those porches when there were festivals in honor of the Sun, sometimes in one and at another in another. I remember having seen many holes in the mouldings made through the stones. . . .

NARRATOR:

For a hundred years or two hundred or maybe three, the gold and the silver and the emeralds and the turquoises were untouched on the mouldings and the great stone walls, being the god's and being beautiful.

GARCILASSO:

There were, within the edifice, five fountains of water, that flowed from different directions. The pipes were of gold and some of the pillars were of stone and others were jars of gold and silver. In these fountains they washed the sacrifices according to their importance and to the magnificence of the festival. I have only seen one of these fountains, which was used to irrigate the vegetable garden of the monastery. The others had been lost and even the one I saw was lost for six or seven months so that the garden was destroyed for want of irrigation, the whole monastery and even the city being concerned at the loss; for there was not an Indian who could explain whence the water of the fountain came.

NARRATOR:

This is the parable of the fountain. There were other things in Cuzco no one could recover when the gold was melted down to ducats. For the Yncas who could bring water under the beds of streams and through the living rock knew many mysteries. The Ynca Garcilasso speaks of this, not without irony.

GARCILASSO:

With all their rusticity, the Yncas understood that the course of the sun's movement was completed in a year, which they called huata. The common people counted the year by the harvests. The Yncas had a knowledge of the summer and winter solstices, which were marked by large and conspicuous signs, consisting of eight towers on the east, and another eight placed on the west side of the city of

GARCILASSO:  
(*cont.*)

Cuzco, placed in double rows, four and four, two small ones between two other high ones. The high towers were used as observatories, whence the smaller ones could be more conveniently watched; and the space between the small towers, by which the sun passed in rising and setting, was the point of the solstices. The towers on the east corresponded with those on the west, according as it was the summer or winter solstice.

NARRATOR:

This would have been in the Fifteenth Century or maybe the Fourteenth, when the calendar in Europe was sliding out of the seasons of the sun until the months had lost their meanings.

GARCILASSO:

The Yncas were also acquainted with the equinoxes and observed them with great solemnity. To ascertain the time of the equinox they had a stone column very richly carved erected in the open spaces in front of the Temple of the Sun. The pillar was erected in the center of a large circle occupying the whole width of the courtyard. Across the circle a line was drawn from east to west. When the priests thought that the equinox was approaching, they carefully watched the shadow thrown by the pillar every day.

SOUND:

*Flutes and pipes and drums: a gay sound of rejoicing and holiday.*

GARCILASSO: When the shadow was exactly on the line from sunrise to sunset, and the light of the sun bathed the whole circumference of the column at noon without any shadow being thrown at all, they knew that the equinox had arrived. Then they adorned the pillar with all the flowers and sweet herbs that could be gathered and placed the chair of the Sun upon it, saying that on that day the Sun with all its light was seated upon the pillar.

SOUND: *The music and rejoicing, the shouting and voices.*

NARRATOR: The empire of the Yncas was an empire of coastal deserts and river valleys and mountain highlands, bound together by the fame of the Kings Yncas, and by the governors of thousands and the governors of hundreds and the governors of tens, and by the historians and accountants who wrote their histories and kept their records in knots in hanks of yarn, and by the runners on the Ynca roads but most of all by the runners on the roads.

GARCILASSO: Of the two royal roads which extend throughout Peru, from north to south, historians speak in terms of admiration, but all praise comes short of the grandeur of the work. Its length was fifteen hundred miles over a country where there are ascents and descents several leagues in extent. The Indians made, on the highest parts of the road, large platforms with masonry steps to ascend to them, where

GARCILASSO:  
(*cont.*)

those who carried the royal litter might rest themselves, and where the Ynca might enjoy the view in all directions from the summit of those snowy heights. In some parts, according to the heights of the mountains over which the road passes, there is a view extending over fifty, sixty, eighty and one hundred leagues of country, and the peaks appear to be so high as to reach the heavens. Nothing remains of this magnificent work except what time and war have been unable to destroy. Only on the road of the coast valleys, and in the vast sandy deserts, where there are also sand hills of various heights, the tall poles remain to guide the traveller.

NARRATOR:

In the days of the Ynca there were two roads under the moon in that empire and both were marvels. The one was of stone in the cordilleras, the other ran in the valleys between walls.

Pedro Cieza de León, who saw them as a boy in the childhood of Garcilasso, has this to say of the coast road in his famous "Chronicle of Peru," published at Antwerp in 1554: "The Caciques and officers, by order of the Yncas, made a road fifteen feet wide through these coast valleys with a strong wall on each side. The whole space of this road was smooth and shaded by trees. These trees, in many places, spread their branches laden with fruit over the road, and many birds fluttered amongst the leaves. The walls on each side extended

from one place to another, except where the sand drifted so high that the Indians could not pave the road with cement, when huge posts, like beams, were driven in at regular intervals to point out the way."

*The single flute alone under the mountains and the moon.*

ARRATOR:

For twenty-five hundred miles along the narrow coast between the Southern Ocean and "that never trodden by man nor animal nor bird, that inaccessible chain of snowy mountains," as Garcilasso puts it, the empire of the Yncas stretched its length of stone—its great roads of heavy masonry, its majestic temples and its cities. And there were other monuments and cities white with moonlight in those centuries.

Far north of the northern boundary of the Yncas' empire, in the endless forests that are Yucatan and Guatemala, and north of that in Mexico, and north into the mountains by the Colorado, the moon above America found squares and blocks of white where men had cut the stones or shaped the clay to make their cities. Some of the cities were alive. Some had long been dead but the white squares showed where they had been. There was Tenochtitlan beyond the woman mountain by the mountain water of the Aztecs. There was Uaxactun, the oldest city of the Mayas, and men had forgotten it before Columbus but the stones were

NARRATOR:  
(*cont.*)

there. And there were things that lasted longer even than the stones: things made of breath that the living left for the living from one time to the next and on beyond. There were things like this that the Yncas listened to for centuries before the ships came.

SOUND:

*The Ynca flute.*

NARRATOR:

Things like this that the Aztecs heard in their palaces with the painted beams and the woven mats, in the smell of the lake water.

VOICE:

You, great nocturnal tippler, flayer-father,  
Why do you make us beseech you?

Why hide away?

Why does rain not fall in the fields?

Clothe yourself in your human skin,

Your garments of gold,

Let it rain, let rain-water fall—

O father! Your precious jewels of water have  
fallen at last!

The tall cypress is full of humming birds.

NARRATOR:

Things like this that the Mayas heard in their temples of stone with the stone steps at the edge of evening.

MAN'S VOICE:

Most sorrowing star  
Adorns the chasm of night,  
Hushes with fear in the house  
of sorrow.



Terrible trumpet blares loud  
In the vestibule of the house of  
the nobles.  
The dead understand not, the  
living will understand.  
Every moon, every year, every day,  
every wind,  
Pursues its way and passes.  
Thus comes all blood to the place  
of its quietude,  
SOUND: As it comes to its power and throne.

NARRATOR: These things, ancient things of stone and  
breath, were there before the discoverers.  
They are there still.

SOUND: *The Ynca flute.*

NARRATOR: The moon rising out of Europe, out of the  
ocean, had seen the shapes of stone across  
America for centuries before the men of Eu-  
rope saw them. But the men of Europe called  
it the New World and were right to call it so.  
It was new to them, new to their hopes. To  
them it was the future in the west: to the  
Yncas, the ancient land beyond the moun-  
tains. . . .

SOUND: *The flute.*



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V

THE AMERICAN GODS

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## THE AMERICAN GODS

NARRATOR:

History in all the continents has its unanswered riddles to which the ancient records, the decipherable inscriptions on the fallen stones, the traditions remembered from one generation to the next, speak as they can. On this continent also there are riddles for the stones to read—riddles as dark as those in any country—and one, perhaps the darkest, time has asked us.

VOICE:

*(formal, impersonal, declamatory, like the words of an inscription on a wall)*

For what cause or reason, or by what circumstance, or under what compulsion, the Emperor Montezuma permitted the General Hernán Cortez to enter upon his nation of Mexico and his city of Tenochtitlan, neither defending that nation nor that city nor resisting while he well could?

SOUND:

*There is a pause after the voice and a silence, and in the silence, deep in it and barely audible but yet deeply heard, the slow, solemn, distant thud and silence and thud and silence and thud of a priest's drum in an Aztec temple.*

VOICE:

*(over the drum)*

For what cause or reason or by what compulsion of force, and of which force, the Emperor

VOICE:  
(*cont.*)

Montezuma, ruler of a warlike nation of a million men, commander of a disciplined army of ten thousand warriors, well drilled and well equipped with spears, shields, slings, cuirasses of cotton, swords of obsidian, permitted the General Hernán Cortez, with five hundred men, sixteen mares and horses, ten small brass cannon, four falconettes, thirteen muskets and thirty-two cross-bows, to march three hundred miles over mountainous and difficult country and through dangerous defiles without a battle fought by the army of Montezuma or a blow struck to prevent it?

SOUND:

*Over the distant drum, and as though answering it, a second, nearer.*

VOICE:  
(*over the drums*)

For what cause, or for what reason, or under what compulsion beyond reason the Emperor Montezuma, lord of a city of strong stone constructed on a lake island, approachable only by causeways, the causeways defended by numerous forts, towers, redoubts, walls, ditches, permitted the General Hernán Cortez to cross without opposition or a show of force between the Burning and the Woman Mountains and to descend into the Valley of Mexico and to march for two leagues which is six miles on the stone dyke in the salt lake?

SOUND:

*Two drums and a third and a fourth and a fifth, some nearer and some farther as though from the temples of the inner wards of the city and from*

*the outer wards and from the villages over the lake water.*

VOICE:  
(*over the drums*)

For what cause or reason or by what necessity or under the persuasion of what influence or power the Emperor Montezuma, master and absolute master of many towns and nations, whose menial tasks were performed before him by chiefs and nobles, their feet bare, their eyes cast down; whose markets were filled with such fruits and animals, and furs of such value, and gold-work and featherwork of such unsurpassable worth that no market in any kingdom or continent was superior to it in richness or beauty—for what cause or reason, or under what necessity, so great a king received the General Hernán Cortez upon the causeway of the lake and led him into the city of Tenochtitlan and housed him in his own house and thereafter, without blows or struggle or force, permitted the General Hernán Cortez to chain his person and to make him prisoner in his own city and palace and in the end destroy him?

SOUND:

*The many drums now beating together or almost together in one beat and rhythm—the whole city of temples speaking by its drums.*

NARRATOR:  
(*over the drums*)

Fray Bernardino de Sahagún learned something of that riddle and its answer—something of the causes beyond cause and the reasons that had no reason, in the City of Tenochtitlan and the country of Mexico. By

NARRATOR:  
(*cont.*)

questioning the old men who could remember what Tenochtitlan had been before the Conquest, and by the interpretation of the picture writing in which their memories were written down, Sahagún was able to write in his great "History" an account of things that even then had disappeared from Mexico and from the earth—things dark and unbelievable enough—but not without their meaning for the tragedy of Montezuma.

SOUND:

*The almost-but-not-quite-together beating of the drums.*

SAHAGÚN:  
(*a grave, learned  
and quite impersonal voice*)

The twelfth month was called Teotleco which means the month of the arrival of the gods. They celebrated this festival which was in honor of all the gods because they say the gods had gone to other parts. On the last day of the month they made a great feast because the gods had returned.

SOUND:

*The drums on one slow, ominous, insistent beat.*

NARRATOR:

So Sahagún, translating the pictures of the old men and the explanations of the interpreters.

SAHAGÚN:

At midnight on this day they ground a small quantity of corn flour and of it they made a small quite compact heap in the principal temple. By this they were able to tell when all the gods had arrived because there appeared the imprint of a small foot on the



flour, and then they knew that the gods had come.

SOUND: *The beat of the many drums changes from an evenly spaced slow beat to an accented beat—a strong stroke and a weaker stroke and then silence as though asking and waiting and the double beat again and the silence.*

NARRATOR: This was the festival of all the gods, and the priests of the temples of Tenochtitlan waited together, with their drums and their instruments, each temple or tower its priests waiting for the print in the corn flour and the headpriest's cry of recognition. There were hundreds of these temples in all the wards and districts of the city, and in the small towns of the causeways and the villages beyond the lake.

SOUND: *The waiting, asking drums.*

SAHAGÚN: All night the head-priest kept watch. He would come and go many times in his vigil to see whether the imprint of the foot was there.

SOUND: *The asking beat of the many drums.*

NARRATOR: These temples scattered throughout the city  
(over the sound of the drums) were in the shape of great towers with flights of pyramidal stairs ascending, and with burning altars above, and the fires of the many altars over the roofs were never extinguished, giving a flickering and reflected light by night

- NARRATOR: on the walls and streets and canals of the city. Here in these temples, on the night of the returning of the gods, the priests waited.  
(*cont.*)
- SOUND: *The accented beat of the many drums, the accent sharper, the silences longer.*
- SAHAGÚN: As soon as he saw the sign of the foot the head-priest would shout, "Our lord has arrived."  
"Our lord has arrived."
- SOUND: *The cry of a man's voice under the voice of Sahagún, the sound strong and rhythmical and sonorous but the words unintelligible. The cry is picked up and repeated by other and farther voices. The drums swell to a full, even, rapid, triumphant beat, the copper horns and the silver horns and the conch shells rising above them and the wooden drums (the teponatzli) of varying tones and the flutes and the rattles.*
- SAHAGÚN: The other priests and ministers of the idols, as soon as they heard this voice, rose at once and played on the shells and trumpets in all the temples of all the districts of the towns and the villages.
- SOUND: *The trumpets and drums and flutes rise in a great crescendo and fade out.*
- SAHAGÚN: On the following day they burned alive a great many slaves, throwing them into the fire on a large altar which was called tecalco and had steps on four sides. On top of the

altar a young man danced, adorned with a switch of long hair and a tuft of rich plumes and a crown. His face was painted black with white lines. . . . When they threw one of the slaves into the fire, he whistled by sticking his fingers into his mouth as is their custom. Another youth, dressed like a bat, carried rattles, one in each hand; these rattles were made like the heads of large poppies and with them he produced sounds.

SOUND:

*The dancing rhythm of the wooden drums and the wooden rattles and the deep conch shells and the horns, and then, sharply, the shrill whistle and the voices shouting and the drums and the shrill whistle again and the voices and drums and the whistle. The sound fades.*

NARRATOR:

It was not, as the Conquistadors had thought, out of mere cruelty and beastliness that the Aztecs sacrificed their captives and their slaves and by the cruelest deaths. There were those who commanded these things and had power. Fray Bernardino de Sahagún learned their names and their attributes from the old men under the village trees. There was Texcatlipoca, "the true and invisible god" who was also called Necocyautl, "which means sower of discord on both sides." There was Vitcilupuchtli, "a great destroyer of towns and killer of people," and Quetzalcoatl, who "swept the road clear for the gods of the water"; and Civacoatl, the goddess who "granted adverse things such as poverty,

NARRATOR:  
(*cont.*)

mental depression and sorrows"; and Centeotl, who was called "the mother of the gods and our grandmother."

SAHAGÚN:

Centeotl was venerated by soothsayers who tell the good or bad fortune children will have according to the date of their birth or the time or signs. She was likewise venerated by those who predict the future with grains of corn, and those who do it by looking into the water of a bowl as well as those who tell fortunes by means of small strings. . . .

NARRATOR:

There were many gods in that country, each with his power, and the old men, talking to Sahagún, painted them all on the fig-tree paper, remembering this and that—the colors for this, the dances for that, the music, the ritual.

SAHAGÚN:

The first month of the year was called among the Mexicans Atlacahualco. This month began on the second day of the month of February, when we celebrate the Purification of our Lady. On this first day of the month they celebrated a festival in honor of the gods Tlaloc, whom they considered as the gods of rain.

SOUND:

*A sweet sad music of flutes beginning.*

SAHAGÚN:

For this they searched for a great many infants, buying them from their mothers and choosing especially those who had two twisted

tufts of hair on the head and were born under a lucky sign. . . .

SOUND: *The flutes and a small sad drum.*

SAHAGÚN: They adorned them with precious stones, rich plumes, and with blankets and mantles very elegantly made; with very elaborate and highly polished sandals. They furthermore put wings like angels' wings on their shoulders and dyed their faces with gum oil. In the middle of their cheeks they painted small white disks, and they placed the children in litters which were ornamented with rich plumes and other precious jewels.

SOUND: *The sweet sad music of the flutes.*

SAHAGÚN: While they bore them in these litters they played flutes and trumpets for them such as they used and wherever they passed the people were weeping.

SOUND: *The flutes and the horns softly.*

SAHAGÚN: Upon reaching an oratory close to Tepelzinco on the eastern slope and which was called Tococan, they stopped overnight and kept watch over these infants. In order that they might not fall asleep the priests of the idols sang their songs to them.

SOUND: *The flutes and drums and the droning voices.*

SAHAGÚN: If the children cried very much when they took them to the place of sacrifice, those who were with them were glad, because they considered it as a sign that there would be abundant rain.

NARRATOR: The gods were there in the first month, giving or withholding the rain as the tears of the sacrificed children fell or did not fall. And there were other festivals and other devices for reading the purpose of the god.

SAHAGÚN: The fifth month was Toxcatl and on its first day they celebrated a great feast in honor of Texcatlipoca whom they held to be the god of gods. In his honor they killed on the day of his festival a chosen young man without a blemish on his body and who had been kept in all the delights of life for a whole year, being taught to play musical instruments, to sing and to recite. They also taught him how to swallow smoke and smell the perfume of flowers, walking about as do the nobles and people of the court.

SOUND: *A gay and frivolous but charming melody played on a flute and repeated after a silence and again repeated. A jingle of gold rattles under the music.*

SAHAGÚN: The young man thus chosen to die went through the streets playing the flute, carrying flowers and smoke-sticks. He was free to be out day and night wherever he chose to go in the town; he was always attended by eight

pages, dressed like those of the palace, and he himself was given elegant and precious clothing, for henceforth he was considered as a god himself.

SOUND: *The gay music of the single flute, the jingling steps.*

SAHAGÚN: His whole body and face were anointed. After he was dressed they adorned him with a wreath of flowers. In his ears he bore gold ornaments like earrings. On the arms above and below the elbow he wore gold rings and around the wrists strings of precious stones. On his legs he had golden jingles which sounded at every step.

SOUND: *The phrase of the gay flute, the golden jangling.*

SAHAGÚN: Twenty days before the feast these clothes were changed; they washed the dye off his skin and married him to four maidens with whom he lived for these last twenty days of his life. They now cut his hair in the style worn by war-captains, tying it like a tassel on top of the head with a very elaborate fringe and adorned with two tassels with their buttons made of feathers and gold, very oddly made. . . .

SOUND: *The melody of the flute but changed, saddened: the sound of the golden rattles gone.*

SAHAGÚN: Five days before the sacrifice they worshipped the young man as one of their gods and solemn banquets and dances were held in very elaborate costumes.

SOUND: *The sad melody of the flute picked up by the copper horns and the silver horns and the singing drums of wood and the rattles.*

SAHAGÚN: After this they placed him in a canoe which was covered by an awning; with him went his four wives consoling him. Leaving Tepepulco they navigated toward a place called Tlapizaoan. . . .

SOUND: *The copper horns and the silver horns and the wooden drums fading out and the melody of the flute departing over water.*

SAHAGÚN: At this place his wives and all the other people left him, returning to the city, and he remained only with the eight pages who had been his followers for the entire year.

SOUND: *The flute farther off.*

SAHAGÚN: They took him to a small and poorly decorated temple which stood near the highway outside the city at almost a league from it.

SOUND: *The flute going on.*

SAHAGÚN: As they reached the foot of the tower the young man mounted the steps by himself,



and on the first one he broke one of the flutes he had played during that past year; on the second another and so until he had broken them all and thus reached the top. There he was awaited by the priests who were to kill him. . . .

SOUND: *The melody of the flute broken and continuing and broken and continuing and broken and then silent.*

NARRATOR: The door between the world of gods and the world of men in the city of Tenochtitlan was the painful door of death to which the temple steps went up. It was never closed from the year's beginning to the year's end and the gods were there beyond it. For the gods were present in Tenochtitlan as they have not been present often in this world in any country. And Montezuma, who had been a priest before he was a king—who had learned indeed of his election to be king upon the stairway of his temple—knew more than most men of the presences beyond the doors of pain and feared them, and knew well why he feared them.

SOUND: *The phrase of the flute and a deep drum ending it, and the flute again and the drum.*

NARRATOR: It may be that Montezuma lost his kingdom through this knowledge and this fear. It may be that his knowledge of the presence of the gods and his understanding or his lack of understanding of their intimations and their

NARRATOR:  
(*cont.*)

meanings left him powerless to act while there was time for action. For there were signs and wonders in Tenochtitlan before the Spaniards came that seemed to intimate some warning like the signals from another world. The learned Father José de Acosta who, like Sahagún, questioned the Indians, has much to say in his "Moral History of the Indies" of these "presages and strange prodigies which," as he says, "happened in Mexico before the fall of their Empire."

DE ACOSTA:

No man should contemne what is written in the Histories and Annales of the Indies touching presages and strange signes of the approaching ende and ruine of their kingdome, which in my opinion is worthy of credite and beliefe, both for that it chanced late and the memory is yet fresh, as also for that it is likely that the Divell lamented at so great a change. I will therefore set them downe heere as true things.

SOUND:

*The drum louder and heavier and more ominous but distant.*

DE ACOSTA:

At that time appeared in the heavens a great flame of fire, very bright, in the forme of a Pyramide which beganne to appeare at midnight and went still mounting untill the Sunne rising in the morning. . . .

SOUND:

*The drum.*

DE ACOSTA: It happened also that fire tooke the Temple whenas no body was within it, nor neare unto it, neither did there fall any lightning or thunder. . . .

SOUND: *The drum.*

DE ACOSTA: There was a Comet seene in the day time, running from the west to the east casting an infinite number of sparkles. . . .

SOUND: *The drum.*

DE ACOSTA: The great lake betwixt Mexico and Tezcucco, without any wind, earthquake, or any other apparent signe beganne sodainely to swell and the waves grewe in such sort as all the buildings neare unto it fell downe to the ground.

SOUND: *The drum.*

DE ACOSTA: They say at that time they heard many voices as of a woman in paine, which sayde sometimes, "O my children, the time of your destruction is come," and otherwhiles it sayde, "O my children, whither shall I carry you, that you perish not utterly?"

SOUND: *The drum.*

DE ACOSTA: There appeared likewise many monsters and the one was a bird as bigge as a crane and of

DE ACOSTA:  
(*cont.*)

the same colour but of a strange and unseene form, which had on the top of his head a thing bright and transparent in the form of a looking glass wherein Montezuma did behold a warre-like nation coming from the east, armed, fighting and killing.

SOUND:

*The drum slow and menacing and between the slow strokes silence.*

NARRATOR:

Whether for this, or for some other reason, Montezuma, as de Acosta says, when they brought him word from the coast that ships had appeared in the eastern sea, "remained very pensive with this message, commanding them not to reveale it to any one." That was probably Grijalva's voyage which touched at the coast in 1518 and went on. But there were other ships to come.

DE ACOSTA:

The yeare following, they discovered a fleet at sea, in which was the Marques del Valle Don Fernando Cortes, with his companions, a newes which much troubled Montecuma, and conferring with his counsell, they all said, that without doubt, their great and ancient Lord Quetzalcoatl was come, who had saide, that he would returne from the East whither he was gone. The Indians held opinion, that a great Prince had in times past left them and promised to returne.

SOUND:

*The slow drum.*

DE ACOSTA: They therefore sent five principall Ambassadors with rich presents to congratulate his coming.

NARRATOR: These were the famous gifts of the golden sun and the silver moon—the same perhaps that the artist Albrecht Dürer tells of seeing in the emperor's house. As for the Spaniards, the ambassadors saw their ships and their arms and their horns and heard their guns and committed it all in their picture writing to leaves of paper made from the wild fig bark and so returned beyond the mountains to their city and their master.

DE ACOSTA: Whenas the Ambassadors returned to Mexico Montecuma was in the house of audience; but before he would heare them, he commanded a great number of men to be sacrificed in his presence and with their blood to sprinkle the Ambassadors, supposing by this ceremony to receive a good answer. But understanding the report and information of the maner of the shippes, men, and armes, he stood perplexed and confounded: then, taking counsell thereon, he found no better meanes then to labour to stoppe the entrie of these strangers by coniurations and magicke Artes.

SOUND: *The drum.*

DE ACOSTA: They therefore assembled together all the Sorcerers, Magicians and Inchanters who went to a certaine place which they thought

DE ACOSTA:  
(*cont.*)

fit for the invocation of their divells and practising their artes (a thing worthy of consideration) they wrought all they could but seeing nothing could prevaile against the Christians they went to the king telling him they were more than men. . . .

NARRATOR:

And Cortez established himself at the old site of Vera Cruz and moved up from the coast by the town that is now Jalapa and climbed to the great plateau by the mountain passes and entered Tlaxcala and conquered the Tlaxcalans who, though far fewer than the Aztecs, did not hesitate to fight him, and marched on to the south and the west by Cholula and came toward the valley of Mexico, each day nearer, and still Montezuma was doubtful of the intimations and the meanings of the gods.

DE ACOSTA:

And therefore he assembled a greater number than before (of coniurors and witches) threatening them that if they returned without effecting what he had given them in charge, not any one should escape, whereunto they all promised to obey. And for this cause all the divells officers went to the way of Chalco by which the Spaniards should pass, when mounting to the top of a hill Tezcatlipuca, one of their principall gods appeared unto them, as comming from the Spaniards camp, in the habite of Chalcas who had his breast bound about eight folde with a corde of reeds. . . .

SOUND:

*The drum louder, nearer, more urgent.*

DE ACOSTA:       Hee came like a man beside himselfe out of his wits, and drunke with rage and furie, saying: "What come you hither to do, O yee traitours? Returne presently and behold Mexico, that you may understand what shall become thereof."

SOUND:           *The drums, louder, nearer.*

DE ACOSTA:       And they say that, turning towards Mexico to behold it, they did see it flaming on fire.

SOUND:           *The increasing rhythm of the drums.*

DE ACOSTA:       Then the divell vanished away, and they, not daring to passe any farther, gave notice thereof to Montecuma, whereat he remained long without speaking looking heavily on the ground; then he said, What shall we doe if god and our friends leave us and helpe and favour our enemies? I am now resolute, and we ought all to resolve on this point, that happen what may, we must not flie nor hide ourselves, or shew any signe of cowardice. I onely pittie the aged and infants who have neither feet nor hands to defend themselves. Having spoken this he held his peace, being transported into an extasie.

SOUND:           *The drums and over the drums flutes and over the flutes the trumpets of silver and copper in a great triumphant, tragic, sardonic music—acquiescent and yet proud. Over the music the voice as at the beginning.*

VOICE:

For what cause or reason or by what necessity or under the persuasion of what influence the Emperor Montezuma received the General Hernán Cortez upon the causeway of the lake and led him into the city of Tenochtitlan and housed him in his own house and thereafter, without blows or struggle or force, permitted his person to be chained with fetters and his kingdom taken from him and his life destroyed. . . .

SOUND:

*The drums and flutes and trumpets rise to a crescendo and fade out.*



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## VI

### THE MANY DEAD

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## THE MANY DEAD

SOUND: *Indian war drums, far off and dulled and numb, and war-cries, old and far away and fading, and a heavy distant gun shot and another and the ghostly cries.*

NARRATOR: There was one chapter of the American experience which was told again and again on every coast of the new continent and inland at the passes of the mountains and the river crossings and at dawn and night-time and in every tongue—in Norse, in Spanish, Portuguese, in French, in Dutch, in Swedish, English.

SOUND: *The ghostly cries and the sad drums stronger and fading out as though the wind from the past had lifted them and let them fall.*

NARRATOR: There was the story of the wars against the Indians on the many and forgotten battle-fields of both Americas—Tenochtitlan, Monongahela—Cajamarca—Tippecanoe—Tlaxcala—Bloody Brook—there was the story of the Indian wars, and of the fame of the conquerors. There was the voice of fame . . . the bronze voice by which the words of fame are uttered.

SOUND:

*Trumpets in a fanfare at a distance, first one, then another answering, then another as though they called to each other up the long American coast from the earth-works of Valdivia at Santiago in Nuevo Extremo, to the fortifications of Pizarro at the new city of Lima, to the rebuilt city of Cortez at Tenochtitlan, to the log forts of the English on the Virginia coasts, to the stockades of Massachusetts Bay.*

BRONZE VOICE: Conquistador!

SOUND:

*The fanfare, far away, out of the past, too faint for the brazen cry.*

BRONZE VOICE:

*(metallic, expressionless, shouting like a bell)*

Of the Conquerors!  
Of those who defeated the Indians!  
In both continents!  
And on the isthmus!  
And the islands!  
Acquiring an immeasurable wealth of Gold!  
Together with turquoises and emeralds!  
And much land!  
All the land!  
Including slaves!  
Of slaves a considerable quantity!  
The destroyers of the cities of Stone!  
Of the villages of Earth!  
Ice!  
Skins!  
Tree-bark!  
The Conquerors of the empires of the Indians!  
In the mountain valleys!  
On the alta plana!

By the sweet water!  
In the forests of hickory and oak-trees!

*(Pause)*

Conquistador!

SOUND: *The fanfare.*

BRONZE VOICE: Hernán Cortez! Conqueror of Mexico!

SOUND: *A trumpet.*

BRONZE VOICE: General Anthony Wayne, victor at the Battle  
of the Fallen Timbers!

SOUND: *A trumpet.*

BRONZE VOICE: Francisco Pizarro! Conqueror of Peru!

SOUND: *A trumpet.*

BRONZE VOICE: Vasco Núñez de Balboa! Conqueror of the  
Isthmus!

SOUND: *A trumpet.*

BRONZE VOICE: Governor Josiah Winslow, victor at the Great  
Swamp Fight!

SOUND: *A trumpet.*

BRONZE VOICE: And of the Conquered also!  
Of those who were overcome!  
Who lost their cities!

BRONZE VOICE: Whose armies were broken!  
(*cont.*) Whose villages were burned!  
Whose lands were taken from them!

(*Silence*)

Montezuma, Emperor of Anahuac.

(*Silence*)

A VOICE: His person seized by Hernán Cortez who was  
(*matter-of-fact,*  
*like a clerk of*  
*court reading*  
*from a record*) his guest, he was taken upon the wall of the  
house where Cortez was under siege and there  
exposed to the stones and arrows of his own  
people who destroyed him.

BRONZE VOICE: The Ynca Atahualpa, Emperor of Peru and  
lord of the land of the four divisions.

(*Silence*)

CLERK'S VOICE: Captured at Cajamarca by Pizarro he was  
held to ransom for a house filled with gold and  
silver. When the ransom was paid he was con-  
demned to death and executed by stran-  
gling with a bow-string.

BRONZE VOICE: Pontiac, Chief of the Ottawas.

(*Silence*)

CLERK'S VOICE: His armies defeated by Colonel Bouquet at  
Bushy Run and his Confederation disbanded,  
he was murdered at Cahokia while walking  
drunken in the forest chanting his medicine.

His murderer was an Illinois bribed by an Englishman for a barrel of whisky.

BRONZE VOICE: Are there no chronicles of the defeated in these wars? Is there only silence?

SOUND: *The ghostly drums and the faint cries.*

CLERK'S VOICE: There are chronicles. There are the quipus, the knotted strings of the Yncas. There are the drawings on the dry stones in the deserts, the scratches of despair on the rocks of the cañons. There are the hieroglyphics of the Aztecs on the maguey paper. There are the "painted sticks" of the Algonquins. . . .

SOUND: *Sad, slow drums of the Indians.*

THE ALGONQUIN: These painted sticks were made to record our glory. Shall I make one now to record our fall? Our enemies have done that.

CLERK'S VOICE: These are the words of the Painted Sticks, of the Lenni-Lenape, the Algonquins.

THE ALGONQUIN: The white-comers, the east-people—they were all received and fed with corn but no land was ever sold to them: we never sold any land. They were allowed to dwell with us, to build houses and plant corn as friends and allies. Because they were hungry we thought they were children of the land of the sun and not serpents and children of serpents. It was useless to resist . . . they were stronger and

THE ALGONQUIN: stronger . . . We resolved to change our  
(*cont.*) lands and to return beyond the Masispek  
near to our old country. . . .

(*Pause*)

We want rest, and peace, and wisdom.

BRONZE VOICE: Silence him!

SOUND: *Fanfare of trumpets as before.*

BRONZE VOICE: Louder! More metal! More brass, bronze,  
silver—

SOUND: *Fanfare of trumpets loud and full.*

BRONZE VOICE: Drums! Trumpets and drums!

SOUND: *Roll of drums under the trumpets.*

BRONZE VOICE: Music! Martial music! Music of drums,  
trumpets, horns, tubes, fifes. . . . Music!

SOUND: *A great surging, rising, triumphant blast of  
martial music—too rich—too brave—too beau-  
tiful.*

BRONZE VOICE: Conquistador!

SOUND: *The music as before: brief and abrupt.*

BRONZE VOICE: Where are the chronicles of fame! The chron-  
icles of victory!



CLERK'S VOICE: They are not lacking. Take for example the Battle of Bushy Run. Colonel Henri Bouquet, a Swiss officer in His Majesty's service . . .

BRONZE VOICE: Trumpets!

SOUND: *Fanfare.*

CLERK'S VOICE: I was saying that Colonel Henri Bouquet, a Swiss officer—a gallant Swiss officer I believe the records state . . .

BRONZE VOICE: Trumpets and drums!

CLERK'S VOICE: A Swiss officer in command at Philadelphia was ordered to march in the summer of 1763 to the relief of Fort Pitt then invested, together with the Detroit, by the Indian confederation under Pontiac. Of which expedition Dr. William Smith, Provost, at that time, of the College of Philadelphia, published an interesting contemporary account based in large part upon the Annual Register of Pennsylvania for 1763. The account, in part, is as follows.

SOUND: *Indian drums at a distance.*

CLERK'S VOICE: Fort Pitt remained all this while in a most critical situation. No account could be obtained from the garrison nor any relief sent to it, but by a long and tedious march of near 200 miles beyond the settlements; and through those dangerous passes where the

CLERK'S VOICE: fate of Braddock and others still rises on the  
(*cont.*) imagination.

(*as though looking up from the book*) The reference is to the red-coat expedition of General Edward Braddock for the conquest of Fort Duquesne in 1755—eight years before. General Braddock lost a third of his army and his own life, and the wagons were driven over his grave to hide it from the Indians.

SOUND: *The Indian drums: louder.*

CLERK'S VOICE: Colonel Bouquet was appointed to march to  
(*reading*) the relief of this fort with a large quantity of military stores and provisions, escorted by the shattered remains of the 42nd and 77th regiments lately returned in a dismal condition from the West-Indies. . . . Early orders had been given to prepare a convoy of provisions on the frontiers of Pennsylvania, but such was the universal terror and consternation of the inhabitants, that when Colonel Bouquet arrived at Carlisle, nothing had yet been done, a great number of the plantations had been plundered and burnt by the savages; many of the mills destroyed, and the full-ripe crops stood waving in the field, ready for the sickle, but the reapers were not to be found.

SOUND: *The wagon wheels and horses and the slash of leaves against the moving men but no word or cry.*

CLERK'S VOICE:   The greatest part of the county of Cumberland, through which the army had to pass, was deserted and the roads were covered with distressed families flying from their settlements.  
(reading)

SOUND:           *The refugees and the cattle calling and the dogs and the children over the sound of the wheels and the men marching—not in step, but marching.*

CLERK'S VOICE:   They knew the strength and ferocity of the enemy. They remembered the former defeats even of our best troops and were full of diffidence and apprehensions on beholding the small number and sickly state of the regulars employed in this expedition.  
(reading)

SOUND:           *The sounds of the refugees fade out. The army tread and the army carts continue.*

CLERK'S VOICE:   The Colonel (deprived of all assistance from the provinces, and having none to expect from the General, who had sent him the last man that could be removed from the hospitals) had nothing else to trust to, but about five hundred soldiers of approved courage and resolution indeed, but infirm, and intire strangers to the woods, and to this new kind of war.  
(reading)

SOUND:           *The column and the heavy carts on the wood road over the mountains.*

CLERK'S VOICE:   The Colonel advanced to the remotest verge of our settlements, where he could receive no  
(reading)

CLERK'S VOICE: sort of intelligence of the number, position, or  
(*cont.*) motions of the enemy. . . . The Indians had better intelligence, and no sooner were they informed of the march of our army, than they broke up the siege of Fort Pitt and took the route by which they knew we were to proceed. In this uncertainty of intelligence under which the Colonel labored, he marched from Fort Bedford the 28th of July and as soon as he reached Fort Ligonier, he determined very prudently to leave his waggons at that post and to proceed only with the pack horses. . . . Before them lay a dangerous defile at Turtle Creek. This defile he intended to have passed the ensuing night by a double or forced march, proposing only to make a short halt in his way to refresh the Troops at Bushy Run.

SOUND: *The forced march at night in the silence of the long defile under the "high and craggy hills," the men silent, the horses restless, the boots tired and slogging through the night leaves.*

CLERK'S VOICE: When they came within half a mile of that  
(*reading*) place about one in the afternoon of August fifth, 1763, after an harrassing march of seventeen miles and just as they were expecting to relax from their fatigue, they were suddenly attacked by the Indians. . . .

SOUND: *A scattering of rifle shots far off at the head of the column, the cries of the Indians, the trumpet, the rapid orders in a firm voice.*

CLERK'S VOICE: The action which grew every moment hotter and hotter, now became general. Our troops were attacked on every side, the savages supported their spirit throughout. . . . The engagement ended only with the day. . . . They passed an anxious night, obliged to the strictest vigilance by an enterprizing enemy who had surrounded them.

(Pause)

Those who have only experienced the severities and dangers of a campaign in Europe, can scarcely form an idea of what is to be done and endured in an American war. . . . In an American campaign everything is terrible; the face of the country, the climate, the enemy. There is no refreshment for the healthy nor relief for the sick. A vast unhospitable desert, unsafe and treacherous, surrounds them, where victories are not decisive but defeats are ruinous; and simple death is the least misfortune which can happen to them.

SOUND: *A great circling cry of the Indians at a distance around the small encampment in the forest.*

CLERK'S VOICE: At the first dawn of light the savages began to declare themselves all about the camp at the distance of about five hundred yards; and by shouting and yelling in the most horrid manner quite round that extensive circumference, endeavored to strike terror by an ostentation of their numbers and their ferocity.

CLERK'S VOICE: After this alarming preparative they attacked our forces, and, under the favor of an incessant fire, made several bold attempts to penetrate into the camp. They were repulsed in every attempt, but by no means discouraged from new ones. Our troops, continually victorious, were continually in danger. The fate of Braddock was every moment before their eyes; but they were more ably conducted. At the very moment when, certain of success, the barbarians thought themselves masters of the camp, the two first companies made a sudden turn, and sallying out from a part of the hill, which could not be observed, fell furiously upon their right flank.

SOUND: *The gunfire and the English charge.*

CLERK'S VOICE: The savages, though they found themselves disappointed, and exposed, preserved their recollection and resolutely returned the fire which they had received. Then it was the superiority of combined strength and discipline appeared. On the second charge they could no longer sustain the irresistible shock of the regular troops who, rushing upon them, killed many and put the rest to flight.

SOUND: *The triumphant charge pressed home.*

CLERK'S VOICE: The savages, thus signally defeated in all their attempts to cut off this reinforcement upon its march, began to retreat with the utmost precipitation to their remote settle-

ments, wholly giving up their designs against Fort Pitt; at which place Colonel Bouquet arrived safe with his convoy, four days after the action.

BRONZE VOICE: Trumpets!

SOUND: *The fanfare.*

BRONZE VOICE: Trumpets and drums.

SOUND: *Trumpets and drums. They fade out.*

CLERK'S VOICE: There are other accounts—all of the greatest interest and of the most noteworthy victories. There is the account, for example, of the conquest of Peru and the capture of the Ynca Atahualpa written by Francisco de Xeres, Secretary to Pizarro.

BRONZE VOICE: The very magnificent lord and commander, Francisco Pizarro, Captain General and Governor, Conquistador de Peru!

SOUND: *Trumpets.*

CLERK'S VOICE: Francisco de Xeres sailed from San Lucar with Pizarro in January 1530, accompanied him upon his voyage, was with him in the march from Tumbez on the coast of Peru up across the Andes to Cajamarca, saw the fighting in that city, returned to Seville in 1534, with the first instalments of gold, wrote a book in the same year, published it.

BRONZE VOICE: With the first instalments of the gold!

CLERK'S VOICE: Of which the following are the pertinent excerpts: Having arrived at the foot of the mountains they rested for a day to arrange the order of the ascent. It was so steep that, in places, they had to ascend by steps, and there was no other place but the road by which the ascent could be effected.

On the plains of Castile it is not colder than on these heights which are clear of trees but covered with a grass, like short *esparto*. There are a few stunted trees and the water is so cold that it cannot be drunk without being first warmed.

The next morning the Governor started, his way leading over the mountains as before, and next day the messenger came in saying, "Atahualpa is in warlike array outside Cajamarca on the plain. He has a large army, and I found the town empty."

BRONZE VOICE: The city of Cajamarca empty! The army camped upon the plain!

CLERK'S VOICE: Next day the Governor departed, intending to reach Cajamarca at noon the day after as they told him it was near.

SOUND: *The horses and the marching men in armor, the commands of the officers and the iron on the stone.*



CLERK'S VOICE: All the troops got their arms ready and the Governor formed the Spaniards, horse and foot, three deep, to enter the town.

On reaching the entrance to Cajamarca they saw the camp of the Ynca Atahualpa at a distance of a league, in the skirts of the mountains. The Governor arrived at this town of Cajamarca on Friday, the fifteenth of November, 1532, at the hour of vespers.

SOUND: *The echo of the iron and the armor from the empty city—from the narrow streets—the stones. . . .*

CLERK'S VOICE: In the middle of the town there is a great open space, surrounded by walls and houses.  
(reading)

This town, which is the principal place in the valley, is situated on the skirts of a mountain, and there is a league of open plain in front of it.

The plaza is larger than any in Spain, surrounded by a wall and entered by two doorways which enter on the streets of the town. The walls of the houses are of very well cut stones and each lodging is surrounded by its masonry wall with doorways, and has its fountain of water in an open court.

In front of the plaza, towards the open country, a stone fortress is connected with it by a stairway leading from the square to the fort. Towards the open country there is another

CLERK'S VOICE: small door with a narrow staircase, all  
(*cont.*) within the outer wall of the plaza.

SOUND: *The restless horses and the men on the stone paving of the empty plaza.*

CLERK'S VOICE: He ordered all the troops to be stationed in  
(*reading*) the open space, and the cavalry to remain mounted until it was seen whether Atahualpa would come.

(*as though looking up from his reading*) It will be recalled that the city was empty. It was dusk and the city was empty and outside on the plain three miles away were the cotton tents of the army of the Ynca Atahualpa—perhaps thirty thousand men. The Spaniards were sixty-two horse and one hundred and two foot.

SOUND: *The horses' hoofs and the scuffing of shoes on the plaza.*

CLERK'S VOICE: The Governor was a long time in the plaza  
(*reading*) with his men waiting for Atahualpa either to come or to assign him a lodging. As it was getting late he sent a captain with twenty horse to speak with Atahualpa. In a little while it began to rain and hail, and the Governor ordered the Christians to take shelter in the rooms of the palace and the Captain of artillery, with his guns, to station himself and his men in the fortress. On the Saturday morning a messenger from Atahualpa to the Governor arrived and said: "My lord has sent

me to tell you that he wished to come and see you, and to bring his men armed. . . .”

SOUND: *The stir of men and of horses on the stone. The bugles. The officer's commands.*

CLERK'S VOICE: Very soon they saw the plain full of men  
(reading) halting at intervals to wait for those who were filing out of the camp. The march of the troops along the road continued until the afternoon.

Having passed all the narrow places on the road they reached the ground close to the camp of the Christians and still troops kept issuing from the camp of the Indians.

SOUND: *The hum and murmur of a great multitude at a distance. Nearer, the stir and clatter of the troops on the stone.*

CLERK'S VOICE: Presently the Governor ordered all the Span-  
(reading) iards to arm themselves secretly in their lodgings, and to keep the horses saddled and bridled, but none were to show themselves in the open space. The Captain of the artillery was ordered to have his guns pointed toward the enemy on the plain, and, when the time came, to fire. All the troops had orders not to leave their quarters, even if the enemy should enter the open space, until they should hear the guns fired off.

SOUND: *The clatter of the Spaniards on the stone of the walled plaza fades out. There is silence in the*

SOUND: *city, the murmur of the hosts of Indians far away and faint. A Spanish sentry calls from above and at a little distance, the words indistinguishable, the voice guarded. There is a weight of silence and of the ominous faint sound.*

(cont.)

CLERK'S VOICE: No Christian was in sight except the sentry  
(reading) who gave notice of what was passing in the army of the Indians. . . .

THE SENTRY: . . . the King Ynca . . .

CLERK'S VOICE: . . . It was near sunset . . .  
(reading)

THE SENTRY: . . . thirty—forty thousand: still more . . .

CLERK'S VOICE: . . . Presently Atahualpa and his troops began to move . . .  
(reading)

THE SENTRY: . . . moving: the whole plain moving. . . .

SOUND: *The murmur of the multitude increases with a music of pipes and of drums and voices singing over the heavy sound of the heels against the earth.*

THE SENTRY: . . . closer . . . by the gate . . .

SOUND: *The singing and the drums and the pipes suddenly louder over the vast hum and murmur of the host.*

CLERK'S VOICE: Soon the van of the enemy began to enter the  
(reading) open space. First came a squadron of Indians

dressed in a livery of different colors like a chessboard. They advanced, removing the straws from the ground, and sweeping the road. Next came three squadrons in different dresses; dancing and singing. Then came a number of men with armour, large metal plates, and crowns of gold and silver. Among them was Atahualpa in a litter lined with plumes of macaw's feathers, of many colors and adorned with plates of gold and silver. Many Indians carried it on high on their shoulders.

SOUND: *The music and the murmur increase, swelling to fill the scene, the walls echoing.*

CLERK'S VOICE: As soon as the first entered the open space  
(reading) they moved aside and gave space to the others.

SOUND: *The entering army always louder.*

CLERK'S VOICE: On reaching the center of the open space,  
(reading) Atahualpa remained in his litter on high, and the others with him, while his troops did not cease to enter.

SOUND: *Rising.*

CLERK'S VOICE: The Governor asked the Father Friar Vicente  
(reading) if he wished to go and speak to Atahualpa with an interpreter. He replied that he did wish it, and he advanced with a cross in one hand and the Bible in the other. . . .

SOUND:           *The music breaks off, first one thread, then another. The near sound of the voices dies away. The farther sound fades out under the scene that follows.*

CLERK'S VOICE: . . . and going amongst the troops up to the  
(reading) place where Atahualpa was, thus addressed him: "I am a Priest of God, and I teach Christians the things of God, and in like manner I come to teach you. What I teach is that which God says to us in this Book. Therefore, on the part of God and the Christians, I beseech you to be their friend, for such is God's will, and it will be for your good. Go and speak to the Governor who waits for you."

SOUND:           *Silence: then the scuff of naked feet on the earth.*

CLERK'S VOICE: Atahualpa asked for the book that he might  
(reading) look at it, and the priest gave it to him closed. Atahualpa did not know how to open it, and the Priest was extending his arm to do so, when Atahualpa, in great anger, gave him a blow on the arm, not wishing that it should be opened.

SOUND:           *Rising excited murmur of the Indians.*

CLERK'S VOICE: Then he opened it himself, and, without any  
(reading) astonishment at the letters and paper, as had been shown by other Indians, he threw it away from him five or six paces. . . .

SOUND:                   *The stir and murmur rise sharply.*

CLERK'S VOICE:       Then the Governor put on a jacket of cotton,  
(*reading*)               took his sword and dagger, and, with the Spaniards who were with him, entered amongst the Indians most valiantly.

SOUND:                   *Sharp cries from the Indians in the foreground: a scuffle of bodies and quick blows.*

CLERK'S VOICE:       And with only four men who were able to follow him, he came to the litter where Atahualpa was and fearlessly seized him by the arm, crying out *Santiago*.

SOUND:                   *The cry of Santiago echoed and re-echoed over the screaming of the Indians, the reports of the two falconets hollow against the stone walls, the trumpets of the Spaniards, the charge of the horse, the Indians screaming.*

CLERK'S VOICE:       Then the guns were fired off, the trumpet was  
(*reading: always*       sounded, and the troops, both horse and foot, sallied forth. On seeing the horses charge, many of the Indians who were in the open space fled, and such was the force with which they ran that they broke down part of the wall surrounding it and many fell over each other. The horsemen rode them down, killing and wounding and following in pursuit. The infantry made so good an assault upon those that remained that in a short time most of them were put to the sword.

SOUND:           *The screams and shouts and the explosions of the guns sweep away into the distance.*

CLERK'S VOICE:   The Governor still held Atahualpa by the  
(*reading*)           arm, not being able to pull him out of the litter because he was raised so high. Then the Spaniards made such a slaughter amongst those who carried the litter that they fell to the ground, and, if the Governor had not protected Atahualpa, that proud man would there have paid for all the cruelties he had committed.

BRONZE VOICE:   Conquistador!  
(*a triumphant shout*)

SOUND:           *Trumpets.*

CLERK'S VOICE:   During the whole time no Indian raised his  
(*continuing to read above the trumpets*)       arms against a Spaniard.

SOUND:           *The trumpets break off sharply. The drums stop. The sound of the battle ends. Silence—flat, hard, deadpan silence.*

BRONZE VOICE:   No Indian . . .  
(*incredulous*)

CLERK'S VOICE:   The Governor, in protecting Atahualpa—  
(*reading*)           (*interrupting himself*) from the Spaniards, that is—received a slight wound on the hand.

(*Silence*)



BRONZE VOICE: No Indian raised . . .  
(*deflated*)

CLERK'S VOICE: It was a very wonderful thing to see so great a  
(*reading*) lord taken prisoner in so short a time, who came in such power.

(*Silence*)

BRONZE VOICE: No Indian raised his arms against a Spaniard . . .

SOUND: *Silence. Under the silence, the sad Indian drums at a great distance.*

CLERK'S VOICE: The battle lasted only about half an hour, for  
(*reading*) the sun had already set when it commenced.

BRONZE VOICE: During the whole time, no Indian raised his arms . . .

SOUND: *The faint drums and a half-heard wailing cry, like the wind's sound.*

CLERK'S VOICE: If the night had not come on, few out of the  
(*reading*) thirty thousand men that came would have been left.

SOUND: *The drums fade. Silence.*

BRONZE VOICE: Of the Conquerors.  
(*slow, no longer shouting, blank*) Of those who defeated the Indians.  
In both continents.  
And on the isthmus.

BRONZE VOICE: And the islands.  
(*cont.*) Acquiring an immeasurable wealth of Gold. . . .  
(*the voice fades out*)

SOUND: *Music.*

VII

RIPE STRAWBERRIES AND GOOSE-  
BERRIES AND SWEET SINGLE  
ROSES



## RIPE STRAWBERRIES AND GOOSEBERRIES AND SWEET SINGLE ROSES

SOUND:

*Gay music of pipers and fiddlers such as might have been heard in an English inn in the 1560's, with a clatter of boots and pewter and men's voices under. The music narrows to a tune, the voices shout recognition and a man's voice, untrained, coarse but true, picks up the melody with the words.*

THE SINGER'S  
VOICE:

Have over the water to Floryda  
Farewell, gay Lunden, nowe;  
Throwe long deles by land and sese  
I am braught, I cannot tell howe,  
To Plymouth towne, in a thredbare gowne,  
And mony never a dele.

CHORUS:

With hy! wunnot a wallet do well?

THE SINGER:

Have yow not hard of Floryda  
A coontre far be west?  
Wher savage pepell planted are  
By nature and by hest,  
Who in the mold find glysteringe golde,  
And yt for tryfels sell,

CHORUS:                   With hy! wunnot a wallet do well?

THE SINGER:           Ye, all alonge the water syde,  
Where yt doth eb and flowe,  
Are turkeyse found, and where also  
Do perles in oysteres grow;  
And on the land do cedars stand,  
Whose bewty do excell.

SHOUT OF VOICES       With hy! tryksy trym, go tryksy, wun-  
IN THE CHORUS:       not a wallet do well?

SOUND:               *The music and the voices fading out.*

NARRATOR:           "Have Over the Water to Floryda" was late news from America but early news for England. It was first sung in the English inns toward the end of the Sixteenth Century, long after the continent had heard the wonders of the New World. The English, who sent the Venetian Cabots out in 1497 and 1508, lagged in the discoveries afterward and it was not until Eden and Hakluyt had published their translations and voyages in 1555 and 1582 that the imagination of England was fired by the continents to the west. Even in Michael Drayton's time, years later, it was possible for that poet to say in his "Virginia Voyage":

You brave heroic minds,  
Worthy your country's name,  
That honour still pursue,  
Goe and subdue;

Whilst loit'ring hinds  
Lurk here at home with shame.  
Britons! You stay too long. . . .

But on the continent and above all in Spain and Portugal, tales of the American wonders had gone from mouth to mouth from the first return of Columbus—so much so that Las Casas, the careful historian, says: "The fame had begun to fly over Castilla, that new lands had been discovered . . . and so many peoples and so different, and things so new that when it was reported that the man who had discovered them came by such a road and brought with him men of such people, not only those of the towns through which he passed but those from towns far from his road came to see him and the towns were emptied and the roads filled."

SOUND:

*An excited gathering crowd: a phrase of ballad-like, gay, excited music over it.*

A VOICE:

*(over the sound of the crowd: something of the spieler quality in the tone)*

Thynges that never in these parts nor in any other partes of the worlde hath been seen, nor unto this daie knowen; and other thynges, which now are brought unto us in greate aboundannce, that is to saie, Golde, Silver, Pearles, Emeraldes, Turkeses, and other fine stones of great value. Also thei doe bryng from that partes, Poppingaies, Greffans, Apes, Lions, Gerfaucons and other kinde of Haukes, Tygers Wolle, cotton wolle, Graine to die colours with-all, Hides, Sugars, Copper,

A VOICE:  
(*cont.*)

Brasill, the woode Ebano, and besides these greate riches: many Trees, Plantes, Herbes, Rootes, Joices, Gummes, Fruites, Licours, Stones that are of great medicinall vertues, in the which there bee founde, and hath been founde in them, verie great effectes that doth exceed muche in value and price.

SOUND:

*The excitement and noise of the crowd rise over the voice.*

NARRATOR:

"Joyful Newes Out of The Newe Founde World," John Frampton, the Englishman, called that account when he translated it in 1577 from the Spanish of the Seville doctor, Nicolas Monardes—and small wonder. But it was not only in the trumpets of the Joyful Newes that the word spread from town to town and from country to country and over the centuries.

SOUND:

*A heavy door opening and closing: a quick tread of feet on stone.*

A MAN'S VOICE:  
(*excited: English,*  
*not "British"*)

But it is written here. It is written here: ". . . whither four of our men with a boat went and brought back again ripe strawberries and gooseberries and sweet single roses. Thus God was merciful to us in giving us a taste and smell of the sweet fruit as an earnest of his bountiful goodness to welcome us at our first arrival. . . ."

A WOMAN'S  
VOICE:

Ripe strawberries and gooseberries and sweet single roses.



THE MAN'S  
VOICE:

He who writes this is the Reverend Higgins. He is writing of the province they call the Province of Massachusetts Bay. And the island is called the Ten Pound Island.

THE WOMAN'S  
VOICE:

And there are strawberries there. (*Pause*) And sweet single roses. . . .

SOUND:

*A phrase of the tune of "Have Over the Water to Floryda."*

MAN'S VOICE:  
(*grave as a Spaniard but with wonder*)

"In Peru," he says—the Holy Father José de Acosta says it in his book—"In Peru there are birdes which they call *Tominejos*, so small that often-times I have doubted, seeing them flie, whether they were bees or butterflies; but in truth they were birdes." Thus he says.

SOUND:

*The ballad tune.*

MAN'S VOICE:  
(*with the emphasis of a French voice—but without, of course, accent*)

It is Champlain who tells of it in his "Petit Discours," where he says in so many words: "There is a kind of little animal the size of prawns which fly by night and make such a light in the air that one would say they were so many little candles."

SECOND VOICE:  
(*French also in its intonation*)

And not only he. It is here also in English in the book written by this English Captain Wyatt of the voyage of Robert Dudley and without equivocation or any possible doubt. Thus: "For theare is a certaine flie which in the night time appeareth like unto a fire, and I have seen at the least two or three score to-

SECOND VOICE:     together in the woods, the which made resemblance as if they were so manie light matches." It is impossible to doubt that this is so.

SOUND:             *The ballad tune.*

MAN'S VOICE:     Nevertheless, Brother Benedict, Peter Martyr himself speaks of this wonder. And in Latin which is a respectable tongue and considered truthful in this monastery—as is he also. To which must be added this, that he cites a king to witness and no ordinary king. I will translate to you. As follows: "The most invincible King Ferdinand relates that he has eaten another fruit brought from those countries. It is like a pine-nut in form and colour, covered with scales and firmer than a melon. Its flavour excels all other fruits. This fruit which the King prefers to all others, does not grow upon a tree but upon a plant, similar to an artichoke or an acanthus. I myself have not tasted it, for it was the only one which had arrived unspoiled, the others having rotted during the long voyage." It is certain, Brother Benedict, that this pine, or, as it is called, this pine-apple doth exist. . . .

NARRATOR:        News from America touched the stale and narrow world of Sixteenth-Century Europe like light at sunset when the rain ends and the clouds lift and the level vivid sunlight from the west sets all the window-glass on fire. Men

who had eaten for generations the ill-cooked, ill-smelling, tasteless dishes of the mediaeval world heard with excitement and a curious wonder of the tomato, of which Acosta told them that it was "colde and very wholesome, a kind of graine great and full of iuyce, the which gives a good taste to sauce, and they are good to eate."

And of the potato, which Peter Martyr said was "equal to any delicacy and indeed to any food," the skin being "tougher than mushrooms or turnips," and "earth-coloured, while the inside is quite white." And there were other marvels. There were animals and Indians and gold.

SOUND: *A babble and excitement of boys' voices.*

BOY'S VOICE: In the school we were told so.  
(*rapid, excited*)

SECOND BOY'S VOICE: Out of Roger Barlow, his "Brief Summe of Geographie."

THIRD BOY'S VOICE: These are his words. I remember his words: "In these mountaynes be many tigres and lions, and divers other beastes, and cattes with berdes which be like apes, but thei be bigger and have grete tailes. Also there is another sort, called yaguanas, and thei have a round hedde and from the forhed to the tail upon his backe ther goeth a rydge of sharpe prickes standing up very grislie."

SOUND:

*The phrase of music. It fades out. The sound of chairs scraping to a table and the ringing of a golden dish as though struck with the thumb-nail.*

MAN'S VOICE:  
(*strong, harsh,  
emphatic*)

From the beginning, in all the Low Countries, or even in all the empire, there was nothing known like these treasures. I myself have not seen them all but Albrecht Dürer the artist has seen them. He has written this in the journal he keeps of his goings and comings: "Also I saw the things that were brought to the King from the New Golden Land: a sun entirely of gold, a whole fathom broad, likewise a moon, entirely of silver, just as big. These things were so precious that they were valued at a hundred thousand gulden worth. But I have never seen in all my days what so rejoiced my heart as these things. For I saw among them amazing artistic objects, and I marveled over the subtle ingenuity of the men in those distant lands."

SOUND:

*The ringing of the golden dish. It fades into a stringed English music, of the Seventeenth Century. A murmur of women's voices.*

WOMAN'S VOICE:

Surely. Surely. It is said in all the voyages. Those Spaniards who went with Grijalva into that great Gulf before Mexico: when they were ten miles from the island of Santa Cruz it gave forth, as they say, "A sweet-smelling fragrance of trees and shrubs."

SECOND WOMAN'S VOICE: The French also. Their Lescarbot, their voyager, says: "Even our dogs"—for so he writes it down—"even our dogs did thrust their noses out of the ship better to draw and smell the sweet air of the land."

THIRD WOMAN'S VOICE: And our own English. In Sir Walter Raleigh, his first voyage, it is written, for this is the book of it: "The second of July we found shoal water where we smelled so sweet and so strong a smell as if we had been in the midst of some delicate garden abounding with all kinds of odoriferous flowers by which we were assured that land could not be far distant; and keeping good watch, and bearing but slack sail, the fourth of the same month we arrived upon the coast."

FIRST WOMAN'S VOICE: (laughing) Is it for this that the Dean of St. Paul's, the poet, Master John Donne, addresses his mistress, "O my America, my new found land"?

SECOND WOMAN'S VOICE: Surely! And so all the poets! So Marlowe when he has his Tamburlaine, that lies a-dying, speak to his sons.

THIRD WOMAN'S VOICE: I remember it. I remember the lines. He cries out:

"Give me a map; then let me see how much  
Is left for me to conquer all the world. . . .  
Look here, my boys; see what a world of  
ground

Lies westward from the midst of Cancer's line  
Unto the rising of this earthly globe;

THIRD WOMAN'S VOICE: (cont.)      Whereas the sun, declining from our sight,  
Begins the day with our Antipodes! . . .  
Lo, here, my sons, are all the golden mines,  
Inestimable drugs and precious stones,  
More worth than Asia and all the world be-  
side. . . ."

FIRST WOMAN'S VOICE:      And that sweet, that well-named poet Andrew  
Marvell, of his Bermudas:

    "Where the remote Bermudas ride,  
    In ocean's bosom unespied . . .  
    He hangs in shade the orange bright,  
    Like golden lamps in a green night,  
    And does in the pomegranates close  
    Jewels more rich than Ormus shows."

SOUND:      *The English air played on viols and recorders  
and lutes. It fades out.*

NARRATOR:      There were the dark stories of the New World  
also—the stories of the dangers of the voyage  
and the barbarities of the Indians and the  
heat or cold of the climate and the venom of  
the serpents and the many and inescapable  
plagues and scourges and the hunger, the long  
marches, the mountain rain. There were the  
known deaths and the deaths that were not  
known. But longer remembered than these in  
the dark and foetid cities of those European  
generations were the taste and fragrance of  
the unfamiliar earth and the plenitude of sun-  
light and the new fruits and the animals. Re-  
turning sailors were not merely questioned by

the Peter Martyrs and the Hakluyts. They were sometimes put to an inquisition of questions, as seems to have happened to a certain David Ingram, an Englishman, who sailed with Simon Ferdinando and John Walker to the Penobscot River in Maine in 1579.

SOUND: *A hearing room or court room. Murmur of voices. Strokes of a gavel.*

CRIER'S VOICE: Certeyne questions to be demanded of Davy Ingram, sayler, dwellinge at Barkinge in the countye of Essex; what he observed in his travell on the North side of the ryver of May. . . .

Imprimis. Howe longe the sayed Ingram travyled on ye North side of the Ryver of May.

SOUND: *Murmur of voices.*

LAWYER'S VOICE: He hath confessed that he travelled there three moneths.

CRIER'S VOICE: Item. Whether that country be fruitfull, and what kinde of fruts there be.

SOUND: *Murmur of voices.*

LAWYER'S VOICE: He hath confessed that it is exceedinge frute-ful and that there is a tre as he called it a plum ten tree which of the leaves thereof being pressed will come a very excellent lycor. . . .

CRIER'S VOICE: Item. What kinde of beasts and cattell he saw there.

SOUND: *Colloquy. Rather longer than before.*

LAWYER'S VOICE: He hath confessed that he saw A Beast in all points like unto a horse, savinge he had two longe tusks of which beast he was put in great danger of his lyfe, but he escaped by clyminge a tree.

CRIER'S VOICE: Item. What kinde of people there be, and how they be aparrelled.

SOUND: *The colloquy.*

LAWYER'S VOICE: He hath confessed that farre into the land there be many people, and that he sawe a towne half a myle longe, and hath many streats farr broader then any streat in London.

Ffurther that the men gooe naked savinge only the myddell part of them covered with skynnes of beasts and with leaves, and that generallye all men weare about there armes dyvers hoopes of gold and silver.

That the womenne of the countrie gooe aparrelled with plats of gold over there body much lyke unto an armor. About the middest of there bodey they weare leaves, which hath growinge there one very longe much lyke unto heare, and lykwyse about there armes and the



smale of there leggs they weare hoopes of gold  
and sylver garnyshed with fayer pearle.

CRIER'S VOICE: Item. Whether there is any quantitive of gold,  
silver and pearle and of other iewells in that  
country.

SOUND: *The colloquy.*

LAWYER'S VOICE: He hath confessed that there is great aboun-  
dance of gold, sylver and pearle and that he  
hath seanne at the heads of dyvers springs  
and in smale rounninge brouks dyvers peaces  
of gold soume as bigge as his fynger, others as  
bigge as his fyst and peaces of dyvers bignes.  
Ffurther that he hath seanne great aboun-  
dance of pearle and dyvers strannge stones of  
what sort of valewe he knewe not.

CRIER'S VOICE: Item. Whether he sawe A beast farre exceyd-  
inge an ox in bignes.

SOUND: *The colloquy.*

LAWYER'S VOICE: He hath confessed that there be in that coun-  
try great abundance of a kinde of beast al-  
most as bigge agayne as an oxe in shape of  
body not much differinge from an oxe, savinge  
that he hath eares of a great bignes, that are  
in fashone much like unto the eares of a  
bloudhound having thereon very longe heare,  
and lykwyse on his breast, and other parts of  
his bodye longe heare.

LAWYER'S VOICE: Ffurther he hath reported of dyvers kinds of  
(*cont.*) wyld beasts whose skynnes are very rich  
furies, lykwyse of dyvers kinds of fruts and  
trees of great eastimatione.

SOUND: *The court room fades out.*

NARRATOR: Davy Ingram was a credulous sailor but no more credulous than others of his time. The good people of the *Mayflower* expedition climbed trees at Plymouth to escape the lions roaring in the woods. The Dutch found unicorns round about Manhattan island and the whole English world believed for years in El Dorado, the golden kingdom of the Andes, of which they read in intercepted Spanish letters—for the intercept was an instrument of intelligence, and of deception, in those years as in these. Consider the state of mind of that doughty admiral Sir George Popham as he read in his admiral's cabin on his ship these abstracts of letters he surprised at sea in the year 1594 "as they were passing for Spain."

SOUND: *Creaking of a ship's cabin: crying of gulls under.*

SIR GEORGE: "Alonso his letter from the Gran Canaria to his brother being Commander of the S. Lucar, concerning El Dorado." What says this Alonso?  
(*abrupt sea-man's voice, as though reading*)

CLERK: To wit: "There have bene certeine letters received here of late, of a land newly discovered

called Nuevo Dorado. They write of wonderfull riches to be found in the said Dorado, and that golde there is in great abundance."

SIR GEORGE: "Alonso's letter from thence to certaine Marchantes of Saint Lucar concerning El Dorado."

CLERK: He writes: "Sirs, we have no newes worth the writing, saving of a discovery lately made by the Spaniardes in a new land called Nuevo Dorado, which is two dayes sayling to the windward of Margarita: there is gold in such abundance, as the like hath not been heard of. Wee have it for certaine in letters written from thence."

SIR GEORGE: "The report of Domingo Martinez of Jamaica concerning El Dorado." What says this report?

CLERK: "He sayeth that in 1593, being at Carthagena, there was a generall report of a late discovery called Nuevo Dorado, and that a litl before his comming thither, there came a frigate from the said Dorado bringing in it the portrature of a Giant all of Gold, of weight forty-seven kintals which the Indians there held for their Idoll."

SOUND: *The creaking of the ship's cabin fades out.*

NARRATOR: Whether Domingo Martinez and Alonso and the rest believed these tales of El Dorado or

NARRATOR:  
(*cont.*)

whether, as an ancient English writer says, the letters were cheats prepared by the Spaniards "to keepe Sir Walter Rawleigh from those parts that were really Rich and in their Possession," is a puzzle for the masters of the records and the rolls. What matters to the rest of us is this—that the tales were told and retold on the Spanish roads and in the English inns and up and down the kingdom of France and the Low Countries and the Empire.

SOUND:

*The pipers and fiddlers playing "Have Over the Water" but far off—a snatch of music heard and recognized and lost.*

NARRATOR:

What matters is the images men carried in their minds as this of Sir Walter's in his "Discoverie of Guiana."

SOUND:

*The pipes and fiddles louder but still far away—down the street—in the next square.*

A MAN'S VOICE:  
(*over the music*)

. . . stripped naked and their bodies annoynted al over with a kinde of white Balsamum . . . When they are annoynted all over, certaine servants of the Emperour having prepared gold made into a fine powder blow it thorow hollow cones upon their naked bodies, untill they be al shining from the foote to the head, and in this sort they sit drinking by twenties and hundreds and continue in drunkennes sometimes sixe or seven daies together.

NARRATOR: The golden men in the gold American sunlight drinking together by twenties and hundreds in that abundant land.

SOUND: *The pipers and fiddlers louder. A voice begins the words.*

NARRATOR: The golden men and the cold fruits and the fireflies under the island leaves and the humming-birds out of the sunlight into the sun and the offshore wind with the smell of the pines and the continent.

SOUND: *The sound of the tune swells and rises.*

THE WOMAN'S VOICE:  
*(natural, simple,  
as though to her-  
self)* O my America: my new found land.



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## VIII

# BETWEEN THE SILENCE AND THE SURF

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## BETWEEN THE SILENCE AND THE SURF

NARRATOR:

There are men in America who do not believe in an American experience. A European experience, they say, is conceivable—an experience in which the peoples of the old countries of Europe might recognize, perhaps, their brotherhood as Europeans. But an American experience in which the men of the American nations could recognize their common American character has never existed, they tell us, and never can.

Those who talk in this way have forgotten the American past or have never known it. The American past, the past of all the American nations, contains more elements, and more characteristic elements, common to the continent as a whole, than any other continental past of which there is knowledge or record.

There is no other continent of the world, Europe or Africa or Asia, in which so great a number of living men share in the memory of a past common to them all. There is no continental past from which such great and unforgettable events make up the common living memory of so many men.

NARRATOR:  
(*cont.*)

Take, for one, the settlement of this continent. Men of undiluted Indian blood aside, there is no American of whatever race or tongue who does not share with every other American the memory of the experience, either in his own life or his father's life or his father's fathers', of the settlement beyond the water—of the departure from a known world and the long crossing of the sea and the settlement in a world not known.

It is not an experience which men forget even in centuries of time. And it was the same experience, or almost the same, on all the coasts of the American continent. In the first years, whether in Plymouth or in Brazil or in Virginia or Acadia, it was the experience of a world between the surf on one side, and the wilderness on the other—a world between two sounds—between the sound of the surf on the beaches where their boats had come aground—

SOUND:       *A slow surf, the hush of the waves withdrawing.*

NARRATOR:   And the wind's sound in the grass or in the brush or in the forests where they still must go.

SOUND:       *The wind in the coarse grass and the solemn trees.*

NARRATOR:   The world of the first settlements was the narrow world between the silence and the surf,

between the water and the wilderness—between the past cut off by water and the future closed by distance and by danger—but not closed.

“If they looked behind them,” wrote Governor William Bradford of his fellow planters at Plymouth, “if they looked behind them, ther was the mighty ocean which they had passed, and was now as a main barr and goulfe,” and if they looked ahead “what could they see but a hideous and desolate wilderness, full of wild beasts, and wild men, and what multitude ther might be of them they knew not . . .” But the Governor can speak for himself.

GOV. BRADFORD:  
*(a grave but very  
masculine voice)*

They had no friends to welcome them, nor Inns to entertaine, or refresh their weather-beaten bodys, no houses or much less towns to repair too, to seeke for succoure.

And for the season it was winter, and they that knew the winters of the countrie, know them to be sharp and violent, and subjecte to cruell and fierce storms dangerous to travill to known places, much more to serch an unknown coast. Besids what could they see but a hideous and desolate wilderness, full of wild beasts, and wild men, and what multitudes ther might be of them they knew not. If they looked behind them, ther was the mighty ocean which they had passed and was now as a main barr and goulfe, to separate them from all the civil parts of the world.

SOUND: *Under the Governor's voice, and rising over it as it ends, the voices of a congregation of men and women singing the 32nd psalm from the Ainsworth Psalter.*

NARRATOR: "Jehovah's song how sing shall we  
Within a forreyn people's land—"

So the congregation of Plymouth sang to the ancient tunes of their psalters in their first winter on that coast.

CONGREGATION: Jehovah's song how sing shall wee  
Within a forreyn people's land?  
Jerusalem, if I doo thee  
Forget, forget let my right hand,  
Cleav let my tongue to my palat,  
If I doo not in mind thee bear,  
If I Jerusalem doo not  
Above my chieftest joy prefer.

SOUND: *The hymn fades into the long remembering of the surf and the sound of the surf into the winds' sound and the silence. Out of the silence the sound of the surf returns.*

NARRATOR: But if the first settlement at Plymouth was a settlement between the wilderness on one side and the "main barr and goulfe" of the sea upon the other, it was only one of many. Olinda on the Brazilian coast, which we now call Pernambuco, or Recife, had the same look to Lopez Vaz when he saw it in the 1580's.

SOUND: *The surf, strong and rising.*

VAZ: The first place inhabited on this coast beyond the river of Marannon [that is, the Amazon River] is called Pernambuck, so named by the Indians, but in Portugale it is called Ville de Olinda. It is the greatest town in all that coast, yet are they in great need of victuals: for all their victuals come either from Portugale or from some places on the coast of Brassill. Beyond this towne lyeth the Cape of Saint Augustine and next thereunto is the river of Sant Francisco, which is a great river. Betweene this river and Baya it is all a wilderness inhabited with cruell savages for whomsoever they take they kill and eate him.

SOUND: *The surf fading into the winds' sound in the leaves and returning and fading.*

NARRATOR: And what was written of the Portuguese settlements in Brazil and of the English at Plymouth was written of the French to the north in Newfoundland at Acadia. Marc Lescarbot wrote of it and not without bitterness almost twenty years before the Pilgrims made their winter landfall.

LESCARBOT: Many that know not what belongeth to the sea do think that the setting of an inhabitation in an unknown land is easy; but by the discourse of this voyage and others that follow they shall find that it is far easier to say than

LESCARBOT:  
(*cont.*)

to do. I have heard of a pilot of New Haven that was with the Englishmen in Virginia twenty-four years ago, that, being come thither, there died thirty-six of them in three months. Yet Virginia is taken to be in the thirty-sixth, thirty-seventh, and thirty-eighth degrees of latitude which is a good temperate country.

NARRATOR:

What Lescarbot said of Virginia was true. When Elizabeth died, twenty years after the first voyage under Sir Walter Raleigh, there was not an Englishman settled on American soil. And yet there had been voyages enough and settlements enough in the hearing of the water with the sea at their backs and the forest and the Indians before. This is Captain Arthur Barlowe's account of the first of these.

SOUND:

*The surf.*

BARLOWE:

And after thanks given to God for our safe arrivall thiether, we manned our boats, and went to view the land next adioyning and to take possession of the same, in the right of the Queens most excellent Maiestie, and rightful Queene and Princesse of the same. Which being performed, according to the ceremonies used in such enterprises we viewed the land about us, being, whereas we first landed, very sandie and low towards the waters side, but so full of grapes, as the very beating and surge of the sea overflowed them.

**SOUND:**           *The surf near and strong—the surge overflowing  
—and under the sound of the beating and surge  
of the sea the voices of the congregation of men  
and women beginning the 32nd psalm.*

**CONGREGATION:**   Jehovah's song how sing shall wee  
Within a forreyn people's land?

**NARRATOR:**       So that many men on many and different  
parts of that coast would have understood  
very well the words of Governor Bradford's  
account of the first winters of the Pilgrims on  
Massachusetts ground. Indeed, it is not dif-  
ficult today for those who know the winter in  
New England to imagine what it must have  
been for them, or to hear, with their ears, the  
sea behind them and, beyond, the strange  
wind in the forest branches and the rustle of  
the few leaves on the winter oaks.

**BRADFORD:**       Monday the eighteenth day of December we  
went on land, manned with the Master of the  
ship and three or four of the sailors. We  
marched along the coast in the woods some  
seven or eight miles, but saw not an Indian  
nor an Indian house; only we found where  
formerly had been some inhabitants, and  
where they had planted their corn.

**NARRATOR:**       This was seven days after the first historic  
landing at Plymouth and six days after Brad-  
ford, returning from the expedition which en-  
tered Plymouth harbor, learned that his wife,

NARRATOR:  
(*cont.*)

Dorothy, had drowned. He does not speak of it—only of the promise of the land.

BRADFORD:

The land for the crust of the earth is, a spit's depth, excellent black mould, and fat in some places; two or three great oaks, but not very thick, pines, walnuts, beech, ash, birch, hazel, holly, asp, sassafras in abundance, and vines everywhere, cherry trees, plum trees, and many others which we know not.

SOUND:

*Silence, and the rustle of wind in the dry leaves and silence.*

BRADFORD:

Many kinds of herbs we found here in winter, as strawberry leaves innumerable, sorrel, yarrow, carvel, brooklime, liver-wort, water-cresses, great store of leeks and onions. . . . So in the morning after we had called on God for direction, we came to this resolution, to go presently ashore again, and to take a better view of two places which we thought most fitting for us; for we could not now take time for further search or consideration, our victuals being much spent, especially our beer, and it being now the 19th of December. After our landing and viewing of the places we came to a conclusion, by most voices, to set on the main land, on the first place, on a high ground where there is a great deal of land cleared, and hath been planted with corn three or four years ago; and there is a very sweet brook runs under the hill side, and many delicate springs of as good water as can be drunk. From thence



we may see into the bay and far into the sea;  
and we may see thence Cape Cod.

SOUND: *Silence and the rustling of the oak leaves near  
by: and far off, faint under the shallow sound of  
leaves, the sound of water on the distant shore.*

BRADFORD: What people inhabit here we yet know not,  
for as yet we have seen none.

SOUND: *The silence and the rustle of the winter leaves  
and silence.*

BRADFORD: In these hard and difficult beginnings they  
found some discontents and murmurings arise  
amongst some. But that which was most sadd,  
and lamentable, was, that in two or three  
months time halfe of their company dyed,  
espetially in January and February, being the  
depth of winter and wanting houses and other  
comforts; being Infected with the Scurvie  
and other diseases which this long vioage and  
their Inacomodate condition had brought  
upon them; so as ther dyed sometimes two or  
three of a day in ye foresaid time . . .

SOUND: *The voices of the congregation of men and women  
singing the 55th psalm.*

CONGREGATION: Mine hart is payned in the midis of me:  
Terroures of death eke falln upon me be.  
Fear is into me come and trembling dread,  
And quaking horroure hath me covered.  
So that I say, who wil give me a wing,  
As a dove, that I might flye and find dwelling?

CONGREGATION: Loe, wandering flight I would make farr away:  
(*cont.*) Lodge would I in the wildernes. Selah.

BRADFORD: Of one hundred and odd persons scarce fifty remained: and of these in the time of most distres ther was but six or seven sound persons; who to their great comendations, be it spoken, spared no pains, night nor day, but with abundance of toyle and hazard of their owne health, fetched them wood, made them fires, drest them meat, made them beads, washed their lothsome cloathes, cloathed and uncloathed them. In a word did all the homly and necessairie offices for them, which dainty and quesie stomacks cannot endure to hear named and all this willingly and cherfully, without any grudging in the least, shewing herein their true love unto their friends and bretheren; A rare example and worthy to be remembred. Tow of these seven were Mr. William Brewster ther reverend Elder, and Myles Standish ther Captain Military Commander unto whom my selfe and many others were much beholden in our low and sick condition.

NARRATOR: But the long winter passed and the New England spring, which none who have ever seen it ever forget, brought them the forest flowers in the thawing of the snow.

BRADFORD: The spring now approaching, it pleased God the mortalitie begane to cease amongst them, and the sick and lame recovered apace, which

put as it were new life into them, though they had borne their sadd affliction with much patience and contentednes, as I thinke any people could doe.

But it was the Lord which upheld them, and had beforehand prepared them; many having long borne the yoake, yea from their youth.

CONGREGATION: Cleav let my tongue to my palat,  
If I doo not in mind thee bear,  
If I Jerusalem doo not  
Above my chiefest joy prefer.

NARRATOR: They did not forget and they did not give over and they continued to sing Jehovah's song "within a forreyn people's land," until it ceased to be a foreign land and became their own—until they no longer heard the sea behind them as a "main barr and goulfe to keep them from all civall parts of the world," but as the surf on their own shore—until the forest which had been a wilderness before them became the future of their children and of the nation their children were to establish and to found.

CONGREGATION: And all that hope in Thee for stay  
Shal joy, shal showt eternallie;  
And Thou shalt cover them; and they  
That love Thy name, be glad in Thee.

NARRATOR: Plymouth is on the north-east coast of North America and Santiago del Nuevo Extremo

NARRATOR:  
(*cont.*)

with its port of Valparaiso is on the southwest coast of South America; and William Bradford was a non-conformist and a cloth-maker and Pedro de Valdivia was a Catholic and a soldier; and William Bradford crossed the water for one reason and Pedro de Valdivia crossed the water for another; but Valdivia's letter to Charles the Fifth on the settlement at Santiago, and Bradford's History of Plymouth Plantation, are two chapters of the same book and of one chronicle. These are Valdivia's words.

SOUND:

*A Spanish bell—one bell and small rather than large and far off.*

VALDIVIA:

It is five years since I came from the provinces of Peru as directed by the Governor Marquis Don Francisco Pizarro to conquer and settle these provinces of Nueva Extremadura, formerly called Chile, and to explore others beyond; and in all this time I have not been able to give your Majesty an account of what I have done in these five years, for that I have spent them in your Imperial service.

SOUND:

*The bell slowly and at a distance.*

VALDIVIA:

Your Majesty shall know that when the Marquis Don Francisco Pizarro entrusted this enterprise to me, there was none that cared to come to this land, and those that most shunned it were they whom the frontier governor, Don Diego de Almagro, brought with

him, and when he left it, it got so evil a name, that it was shunned like the plague.

NARRATOR:

Almagro was Pizarro's close associate in the Conquest of Peru, who quarreled with the conqueror after the Inca was overthrown, and who set off for Chile, in 1535, with five hundred odd Spaniards and fifteen thousand Indians, and took the mountain road though the season was June which is mid-winter in those latitudes, and lost ten thousand Indians and a hundred and fifty Spaniards and all their baggage from the extreme cold which was so great in the altitude of the mountains that five or six years later a certain Geronimo de Alderete, passing by that mountain road, saw, as he says, "a Negro standing propped up against the rocks without having fallen, and his horse also still standing as if carved out of wood and the reins in the hands of the Negro and rotten."

VALDIVIA:

In April, 1539, the Marquis gave me my orders and I reached this valley of Mapocho towards the end of 1540. In this time the chiefs of the land built us our wood and grass houses on the plan I gave them, on a spot where I founded this city of Santiago del Nuevo Extremo in your Majesty's name in this said valley.

NARRATOR:

But if the beginnings of Santiago were peaceful the peace was not for long. The Araucanian Indians of Chile were not gentle and credulous men like the Indians of Peru.

VALDIVIA:

I then got news that they were making a levy of the whole land in two parts to come and make war on us, and I, with ninety men, went to attack the greater one, leaving my lieutenant to guard the town with fifty, thirty being horsed. And while I was dealing with the one part, the others came down on the town and fought a whole day through with the Christians, and burning down the whole town, the food and clothing, and all that we had, so that we were left but with the tattered clothes we had for fighting, and with the arms at our sides, and two small pigs, a sucking-pig, a cock and a hen and about two handfuls of wheat; and, in the end, when night came, the Christians got so much courage, together with that their leader put into them, that, although all wounded, with the favour of our Santiago they put the Indians to flight and killed very many of them. And the next day the Captain Monroy gave me news of the bloody victory with the loss of what we had, and the burning of the town. . . . Seeing the plight we were in, it seemed to me that, if we were to cling to the land and make it your Majesty's forever, we must eat of the fruits of our hands as in the beginning of the world, and I set about sowing.

NARRATOR:

In Santiago as in Acadia and Plymouth and Jamestown the real enemy was hunger and the settlers, whatever their pride and whatever their trade or habit, were driven to till the soil "as in the beginning of the world."

VALDIVIA:

I divided my men into two sets, and we all dug, ploughed and sowed in due order, being always armed and the horses saddled by day. . . . When the seed had been sown, some kept guard over it, and the town in the said way, while I, and the other half, moved all the time eight and ten leagues around it, breaking up the bands of Indians where I knew them to be, for they surrounded us on every side. . . . It was no easy thing to find maize for seeds and it was got with great risk. I also had the two handfuls of wheat sown, and with the Christians and people we brought from Peru in our service, I built up the town again, and we made our houses.

SOUND:

*A bell, deeper in tone than the first but still not a great bell and not loud but at a distance.*

VALDIVIA:

The toils of war, ever-victorious Caesar, men can bear since it is the soldier's boast to die fighting; but if those of hunger are added to them, they must be more than men to bear them also. Of these years we went through the two first in very great want, so great that I could not describe it; and many of the Christians had to go sometimes to dig up roots for food in the former and the other two years, and when these came to an end, things were as before, and all the women, our servants, and children lived thus, and there was no meat, and the Christian who got fifty grains of maize a day thought himself well off; and he who had a fistful of wheat did not grind it

VALDIVIA:  
(*cont.*)

to take away the husks. . . . And so we went about like ghosts and the Indians called us Cupais which is the name they give to their devils, for whenever they came in search of us (for they know how to attack at night) they found us awake, armed, and if needful, on horseback. And so great was the care I took in this all this time, that though we were few and they many, I had them in place and your Majesty may know we did not do it with folded hands.

SOUND:

*The bell louder and a second and deeper bell beneath it.*

VALDIVIA:

The Indians seeing that we stay on in the land and that ships and men have come, have their wings clipped and now, being wearied of going about through snow and mountains like animals they are resolved to give in. And last summer they began to build their villages and they have sown for seed and to feed themselves and from now henceforward there will be a great abundance of food in this land. For this land is such that there is none better in the world for living in and settling down; this I say because it is very flat, very healthy and very pleasant; it has four months of winter, not more, and in them it is only when the moon is at the quarter that it rains one day or two; on all the other days the sun is so fine that there is no need to draw near the fire. The summer is so temperate, with such de-



lightful breezes, that a man can be out in the sun all day long without annoyance.

SOUND: *The two bells and others and deeper beyond them and the voice of Valdivia over the bells until they drown it in a great singing and chanting of all the new bells of the new city of Santiago.*

VALDIVIA: It is the most abounding land in pastures and fields and for yielding every kind . . .

SOUND: *The bells increasing and fading out, and the voice of Valdivia continuing after.*

VALDIVIA: And why I am persuaded I most deserve the confirmation of the authority given me is that with the help in the first place of God I have been able to hold my own with two hundred Spaniards, so far from Christian peoples, where I had to keep them in restraint, hard-worked, dead from cold and hunger, with their arms at their sides, ploughing and sowing with their own hands to feed themselves and their children; and withal they do not hate but love me, for they begin to see all was needful that we might live and win for your Majesty what we came to seek. . . . So your Majesty shall know that this town of Santiago del Nuevo Extremo is the first step on which to raise the others, and by them to settle all this land for your Majesty as far as the Strait of Maghellans and the Northern Sea.

SOUND:

*The bells of the churches of Santiago ringing and clamoring and out of the sound of the bells as they fade into distance the congregation of men's voices and women's voices.*

CONGREGATION:

Jehovah's song how sing shall wee  
Within a forreyn people's land?  
Jerusalem, if I doo thee  
Forget, forget let my right hand,  
Cleav let my tongue to my palat,  
If I doo not in mind thee bear,  
If I Jerusalem doo not  
Above my chiefest joy prefer.

NARRATOR:

Santiago under its mountains with the snow above the summer roofs and the nectarines in the light air and the hot sun and the cool shadow, and Plymouth where the smell of the sea comes in across the farm land and the gulls wheel over the autumn corn—Santiago and Plymouth are as far apart as the geographers make their maps—as far apart in space as Pedro de Valdivia, soldier and devoted subject of His Catholic Majesty, and William Bradford, non-conformist and rebel of conscience, were far apart in a different dimension. But both towns were American beginnings and beginnings of America, and both histories were written in the same language of the heart, however the language of the tongue might differ. William Bradford, with his grave face and his graver habit, would have found the formalities of the little village of Santiago del Nuevo Extremo as strange as

its Spanish, and Pedro de Valdivia, with his love of fine clothes and "to eat and drink all of the best," as Góngora puts it, and his delight in women and "to give anything he had," would have found Plymouth foreign enough, but the two men, as they speak to us now across their four centuries and three centuries of time, speak with a common accent, of a common understanding and a common hope.



IX

NAT BACON'S BONES



## NAT BACON'S BONES

NARRATOR:

The common history of America is the history which leads in any American country from the discovery of a new world of land and rivers and forests to the discovery of a new world of freedom and human hope. It was not an easy history anywhere nor a history without its cost in suffering and blood; and those who served it were not always those who wished to serve it. There were architects of freedom in all the colonies who had no love of freedom—stupid and tyrannical governors whose tyranny and stupidity made freedom dearer than it was; foolish and ill-bred noblemen whose contemptuous treatment of the common run of men made common manhood prouder than a title.

If the brass plates and the carved stones that keep the names of the pretended great, could speak the roster of the men who governed for their masters overseas in the years of the American dominion, there would be many there to whom the cause of freedom owed as much by hatred as it owes its heroes out of love. There would be many there made famous by the fear of freedom that, because it fears it, finds it.

SOUND:

*An ironical fanfare of trumpets.*

VOICE OF THE IN-  
SCRIPTION:

*(the intonation  
and formality of a  
crier in a law  
court)*

Antonio de Sousa de Menezes of the Silver Arm, Governor of the Province of Bahia in Brazil, for that he entered with arms and at night and oftentimes twice in the one night upon the houses of the inhabitants of the said City of Bahia without right or writ or process of any kind or nature, arresting and imprisoning those who opposed him, and inflicting upon those of that place such outrages and indignities as to him seemed fitting so that rule and authority were brought into disrepute in that province.

*(Silence)*

Antonio de Sousa de Menezes of the Silver Arm, Governor of Bahia.

SOUND:

*Silence. The ironical fanfare.*

VOICE OF THE  
INSCRIPTION:

Sir Edmund Andros, Governor of New England, for that the said Governor did ignore and neglect the people of the said colonies of New England and their representatives among the Council of the Colonies, governing by the advice of a few only and the principal of them Strangers to the Country; framing and consulting Bills of the greatest concernment in private; holding trials in remote courts of justice not properly having jurisdiction over the accused; and imposing taxes contrary to the opinion of the Council and without its consent and advice so that the



people of the said Colonies of New England were put in mind to consider their just rights and their remedies denied them.

*(Silence)*

Sir Edmund Andros, Governor of New England.

SOUND:

*Silence. The ironical fanfare.*

VOICE OF THE  
INSCRIPTION:

Don José Antonio de Areche, Member of the Council of the Indies, Visitador General to the Province of Peru, for that the said Don José Antonio de Areche, refusing to hear the complaint of the people of Peru against the illegal oppressions and injustices of the agents of the King of Spain in that country established, and overwhelming and seizing one Tupac Amaru, the leader of the people in the presentation of these grievances, did, in the great plaza of the city of Cuzco, torture and destroy the said Tupac Amaru by tearing his body with lassos tied to the girths of four horses, his wife, his eldest son and his aged uncle being first garroted in his presence and their tongues cut out from between their teeth, as was Tupac Amaru's tongue also for the crime of speech in behalf of the people of Peru in the presentation of grievances:—so that the people of Peru remembered for many years the bitter cry of the young son of Tupac Amaru when he saw his father's body torn by the horses.

VOICE OF THE  
INSCRIPTION:  
(*cont.*)

(*Silence*)

Don José Antonio de Areche, Member of the Council of the Indies, Visitador General to the Province of Peru.

SOUND:

*Silence. The ironical fanfare.*

VOICE OF THE  
INSCRIPTION:

Sir William Berkeley, Governor of Virginia, for that the said Sir William Berkeley, having deprived the freemen and small planters and men of the frontier of the Colony of Virginia of their suffrage as freemen and of their voice in the government of the province, and fearing therefore the just anger of the common people of the province should they assemble together in numbers, and refusing for that cause either to lead the people himself against the Indians who beset them and murdered them, or to commission another to lead them, did denounce as a rebel, and persecute as an enemy of the King, the young man, Nathaniel Bacon of Curles Neck Plantation on the James, whom the people chose as their leader against the Indians, threatening him with imprisonment and with heavy penalties for risking his life in the people's cause, in the which cause Nathaniel Bacon died in his twenty-ninth year and the governor hanged of his comrades and colleagues to the number of twenty-three and all this in the year 1676, and for the most part in the summer of that year, which the people of the colony of Virginia remembered in the hundredth year from that summer.

(Silence)

Sir William Berkeley, Governor of Virginia.

SOUND: *Silence. Then an ancient melody played simply on a lute. A simple, untrained, woman's voice picks up the melody.*

THE WOMAN  
SINGING: Nat Bacon's bones  
They never found. . . .

SOUND: *The voice trails off as though the singer, singing to herself, had forgotten for a moment the words. The lute goes on under.*

NARRATOR: It is true that Nathaniel Bacon's bones were never found. It was said in Virginia for generations afterwards that when Sir William Berkeley dug up the grave in Gloucester County where Bacon had been buried, meaning to expose the rebel's body on the gibbet, he found the casket filled with stones.

THE WOMAN  
SINGING: Nat Bacon's bones  
They never found,  
Nat Bacon's grave  
Is willder ground:  
Nat Bacon's tongue  
Doth sound! Doth sound!

The rich and proud  
Deny his name,  
The rich and proud  
Defile his fame:  
The proud and free  
Cry shame! Cry shame!

THE WOMAN  
SINGING:  
(*cont.*)

The planter's wife  
She boasts so grand  
Sir William's blood  
Makes white her hand:  
Nat Bacon's blood  
Makes sweet this land.

(*strongly, with  
emotion*)

NARRATOR:

It is true also that Bacon's fame was defiled by the rich and proud. For generations he was denounced by the British government in Virginia and by the royalist families who had taken Berkeley's side against the people. There is to be found in Magdalen College in Cambridge, among the papers of that famous diarist, Samuel Pepys, a document entitled "A True Narrative of the Rise, Progresse and Cessation of the Late Rebellion in Virginia, Most Humbly and Impartially Reported by his Majesty's Commissioners." How impartially his Majesty's Commissioners viewed Nathaniel Bacon may be judged by this "short character," as they call it, of the young man's look and manner.

A CLERK'S  
VOICE:  
(*British, formal,  
dry, sour*)

Hee was a person whose erratique fortune had carryed and shewne him many Forraigne Parts, and of no obscure family. . . . Hee was said to be about four or five and thirty yeares of age, indifferent tall but slender, blackhair'd and of an ominous, pensive, melancholly Aspect, of a pestilent and prevalent Logical discourse, tending to atheisme in most companies, not given to much talke,

or to make sudden replies, of a most imperious and dangerous hidden Pride of heart, despising the wisest of his neighbors for their Ignorance and very ambitious and arrogant.

**NARRATOR:**

Nathaniel Bacon had not always listened to those who considered themselves the "wisest of his neighbors" and his neighbors remembered it when the Commissioners came to Virginia afterwards. But his Majesty's Commissioners were less interested in the facts than in the color. Bacon, as they could readily have discovered, was not thirty-five but under thirty. It was no "erratique fortune," as they must have known, but the Grand Tour, complete with tutor and companions, which carried Nathaniel Bacon to "many Forraigne Parts." And his family was indeed "no obscure family," being in fact one of the great families of England on his mother's side as on his father's. Nathaniel Bacon was the only son and heir of Thomas Bacon, master of Friston Hall in Suffolk. He had been a fellow commoner at St. Catherine's Hall in Cambridge University. He had travelled through most of Europe. He had read law at Gray's Inn where forty-eight members of his family, including his great kinsman, Lord Francis Bacon, had read law before him. He had married Elizabeth Duke, daughter of Sir Edward Duke of Benhall, against her father's will. And he had sailed for Virginia in the summer of 1674 with his bride, his father's blessing and eighteen hundred pounds in cash.

NARRATOR:  
(*cont.*)

Worldly young aristocrats with wives they  
love and lands to plant and families behind  
them do not change to rebels in the space of a  
few years without a cause to drive them for-  
ward more powerfully than their habits and  
their comfort hold them back.

THE WOMAN  
SINGING:

The planter's wife  
She boasts so grand  
Sir William's blood  
Makes white her hand:  
Nat Bacon's blood  
Makes sweet this land.

NARRATOR:

If the fame of Nathaniel Bacon rested still,  
as it did for a hundred and thirty years, on the  
official accounts of his Majesty's Commis-  
sioners, and the official spite of the Royal  
governors and the official contempt of the  
Royalist ladies, the riddle of the rich young  
man turned rebel would be hard indeed to  
read.

But in the year 1803 or thereabouts an event  
occurred which changed the chronicles of the  
Colony and changed thereby the history of  
Virginia and changed in consequence the  
reputation of a man four generations dead.  
In that year Thomas Jefferson received from  
Rufus King, Minister Plenipotentiary of the  
United States at the Court of St. James's, a  
remarkable document, now in the national  
library of the United States, the Library of  
Congress, entitled "The Beginning, Progress,

and Conclusion of Bacon's Rebellion," written in 1705, at the request of the British Secretary of State for the Northern Department, by one T.M. T.M. was almost certainly a Virginian named Thomas Mathews who lived at Cherry Point in Northumberland County and who, although a witness of the events of which he wrote, was not a participant in them, nor, certainly, a partisan of Bacon's cause. Seen in the mirror of T.M.'s account, the riddle of Nathaniel Bacon makes lucid and quite simple sense, and Bacon himself becomes, not the brigand and traitor the reactionary planters thought they saw, but the first great hero of the cause of freedom in the western world.

Mathews begins at the beginning, as his contemporaries began also, with the Indian massacres along the Heads of the Rivers above the Falls.

THE WOMAN  
SINGING:

The rich and proud  
Deny his name,  
The rich and proud  
Defile his fame:  
The proud and free  
Cry shame! Cry shame!

MATHEWS:  
(*a serious, un-  
imaginative,  
practical voice*)

In these frightfull times the most exposed families withdraw into our houses of better Numbers, which we fortified with Pallisades and redoubts. No Man Stirred out of Door unarm'd. Indians were (ever and anon)

MATHEWS:  
(*cont.*)

espied, Three, four, five or six in a Party Lurking throughout the Whole Land. Frequent Complaints of Bloudshed were sent to Sr. Wm. Berkeley (then Governor) from the Heads of the Rivers, which were as often Answered with Promises of Assistance. Those at the Heads of James and York Rivers, having now most People destroyed by the Indians, grew Impatient at the many Slaughters of their Neighbors and rose for their own Defence, who, Chusing Mr. Bacon for their Leader, Sent often times to the Governour, humbly Beseeching a commission to go against those Indians at their own Charge which his Honour as often promis'd but did not send. . . .

NARRATOR:

Mr. Mathews says that the Governor's delay was considered a very strange and mysterious thing, some attributing it to his well-known avarice, saying that "Rebells forfeitures would be Loyall Inheritances," and others to his interest in the Indian trade and his fear that "Bullets woud pierce Bever Skins." But the real cause was no "Misterye." Like all those who cheat the people, Sir William feared any gathering of the people.

MATHEWS:

During these protractions and People often Slaine, most or all the Officers, Civill and Military, with as many Dwellers next the Heads of the Rivers as made up three hundred Men, taking Mr. Bacon for their Commandr. met, and Concerted together, the



Danger of going without a Comissn. on the one Part and the Continuall Murders of their Neighbours on th' other . . .

NARRATOR:

Like other Americans whose governors would not act for them, the Americans of Virginia acted for themselves. With the result that the Governor sent a Proclamation after them "Denouncing all as Rebels who should not return within a Limited Day." Most of those who had estates the Governor could seize returned, but Bacon went on, estate or no estate, and found the Indians and killed a hundred and fifty of them with the loss of three of his little army of 57, and marched back down the River to the thankfulness of the people and their love. But not to the love of the Governor. While Bacon was gone among the swamps and forests above the fall line of the rivers, Sir William, eager to shift the indignation of the people to some other object than himself, had dissolved the Long House of Burgesses which, for fifteen years, and in spite of Ordinance and Constitution, he had corrupted and maintained. In the new election which followed Bacon was chosen to a seat as burgess. But burgess or not the Governor set his traps to take him.

MATHEWS:

Coming down the River, Mr. Bacon was Commanded by a Ship with Guns to come on board where waited Major Hone the High Sheriff of James Town ready to Seize him by whom he was Carried down to the Governour

MATHEWS:  
(*cont.*)

and by him receiv'd with a Surprizing Civility in the following words. "Mr. Bacon have you forgot to be a Gentleman?" "No, May it please your Honour," answered Mr. Bacon. "Then" replied the Governour "I'll take your Parol," and Gave him his Liberty.

NARRATOR:

But the Governor's scheme required a public as well as a private surrender, for Bacon was well-loved by men who had arms and knew how to use them. Bacon's friends from up-river had followed their youthful, black-haired captain down from the frontier shacks and the upper plantations. They had been seen by the Governor's agents in the provincial Capital, lolling at the corners of the little streets or staring at the red brick statehouse.

MATHEWS:

The next forenoon, th' Assembly being met in a chamber over the generall court and our Speaker chosen, the Governour sent for us down and said, "if there be joy in the presence of the angels over one sinner that repenteth, there is joy now, for we have a penitent sinner come before us. Call Mr. Bacon"; then did Mr. Bacon upon one Knee at the Bar deliver a Sheet of paper Confessing his Crimes, and begging Pardon of God the King and the Governour, Whereto (after a short Pause) He Answered "God forgive you, I forgive you. God forgive you, I forgive you. God forgive you, I forgive you." When Collo. Cole (One of the Councill) said "and all that were with him?" "Yea," said the Governour

“and all that were with him,” Twenty or more Persons being then in Irons Who were taken Coming down in the same and other Vessels with Mr. Bacon.

NARRATOR:

Thomas Mathews believed that all this was treachery and fraud, the Governor merely pretending friendship to Bacon until Bacon's friends should have left town satisfied of his safety.

MATHEWS:

In three or four daies after Mr. Bacon was first Seiz'd I saw abundance of Men in Town Come thither from the Heads of the Rivers, Who finding him restor'd and his Men at Liberty, return'd home Satisfied; a few Daies after which the Governour seeing all Quiet, Gave out Private Warrants to take him againe, intending as was thought to raise the Militia and so to Dispose things as to prevent his friends from gathering any more into a like Numerous Body and Comming down a Second time to Save him.

NARRATOR:

But Nathaniel Bacon knew, and had good reason to know, that the one crime an old and arbitrary and high-handed governor could never forgive was the crime of taking the people's side. Warned perhaps by his elder cousin, he took horse and fled, the Governor's men at his heels, searching the house of his friend Richard Lawrence at day-break to find him.

MATHEWS:

But Bacon was Escaped into the Country, having Intimation that the Governours Generosity in Pardoning him and his followers and restoring him to his Seat in Councill, were no other than Previous Wheadles to beguile him and his Adherents and to Circumvent them by Stratagem. And so much was true that this Mr. young Nathaniel Bacon (not yet arrived to thirty Yeares) had a nigh relation of Long Standing in the Council a very rich Politik Man by whose meanes 'twas Supposed that timely Intimation was Convey'd to the Young Gentleman to flee for his Life.

NARRATOR:

To flee for his life but for more than his life, too, for the lives of others depended on his. To defend them against the continuing Indian massacres, Nat Bacon needed the Governor's commission so often promised and as often neglected. Dangerous to him as James Town had proved to be, Nat Bacon returned to it—but this time with his friends behind him. The little tattered army of freed-men and frontiersmen and small planters marched across the narrow neck of Jamestown peninsula and “att 2 of the Clock,” as Thomas Mathews puts it, “entred the Town, without being withstood, and form'd a Body upon a green, not a flight Shot from the End of the State-house.” There have been dramatic and moving scenes on the American continent in the four American centuries but few more dramatic or more moving than the scene which

brought the aged, arrogant Sir William Berkeley face to face with the farmers and yeomen of the Virginia west.

MATHEWS:

In half an hour the Drum beat for the House to meet, and in less than an hour more Mr. Bacon came with a file of Fusileers on either hand near the Corner of the State-house where the Governour and Councill went forth to him; We saw from the Window the Governour open his Breast, and Bacon Strutting betwixt his Two files of Men with his Left Arm on Kenbow flinging his Right Arm every Way both like men Distracted. In this hubub a Servant of mine got so nigh as to hear the Governour's Words, and also followed Mr. Bacon, and heard what he Said, who came and told me, That When the Governour opened his Breast he Said, "Here! Shoot me, foregod, fair Mark, Shoot," after Rehearsing the same without any other Words; Whereto Mr. Bacon Answer'd "No May it please your honor, We will not hurt a hair of your Head, nor of any other Mans, We are Come for a Commission to save our Lives from th' Indians, which you have so often promised, and now We Will have it before we go."

NARRATOR:

They had it. And more beside. For Nathaniel Bacon, before he marched out of Jamestown as General Nathaniel Bacon, pressed the Assembly hard, as Mathews says, "Nigh half an hours Harangue on the Preserving our Lives from the Indians, Inspecting the Publick

NARRATOR:  
(*cont.*)

Revenues, th' exorbitant Taxes and redressing the Grievances and Calamaties of that Deplorable Country," with the result that the Assembly, in that month of June, 1676, almost a hundred years to a day before the Declaration of American Independence, repealed the law which limited the suffrage to property owners, and passed in its place a new law enfranchising every freeman in Virginia regardless of property. Whereupon Bacon set out for the falls of the James, and Thomas Mathews with the rest of the burgesses left the little Capital for their plantations—where the news came slow and late.

MATHEWS:

We had Account that General Bacon was March'd with a Thousand Men into the Forest to Seek the Enemy Indians, and in a few daies after our next News was, that the Governour had summoned together the Militia of Gloucester and Middlesex Counties to the Number of Twelve Hundred Men and proposed to them to follow and Suppress that Rebell Bacon, whereupon arose a Murmuring before his face "Bacon Bacon Bacon," and all Walked out of the field Muttering as they went "Bacon Bacon Bacon," leaving the Governour and those that came with him to themselves, who being thus abandon'd Wafted over Chesepiacke Bay thirty miles to Accomac where are two Counties of Virginia.

NARRATOR:

But if the Governor was deserted and rejected by the people, he still had his Royalist friends

and supporters among the rich planters of the tide-water. Taking refuge on the Eastern Shore of Virginia, he waited only until he believed Bacon and his army were again engaged with the Indians above the Falls.

MATHEWS:

The Governour made a second Attempt Coming over from Accomack with what men he could procure in Sloops and Boats, forty miles up the River to James Town, which Bacon hearing of, Came againe down from his Forest persuit, and finding a Bank not a flight Shot long, Cast up thwart the Neck of the Peninsula there in James Town, He Stormed it, and took the Town in which Attack were 12 Men Slaine and Wounded But the Governour with most of his followers fled back, down the River in their Vessells.

NARRATOR:

Having captured the town Bacon could neither hold it nor leave it, for if he held it the Governor's friends had control of the river with their ships; and the Governor's troops, if they came behind him, as Colonel Giles Brent then threatened to do, could cut him off in the peninsula. But if he left it the Governor would return. There was one course and only one to follow.

MATHEWS:

Here resting a few daies they Concerted the Burning of the Town, wherein Mr. Laurence and Mr. Drummond, owning the Two best houses save One, Set fire each to his own house, which Example the Souldiers following

MATHEWS:  
(*cont.*)

Laid the Whole Town (with Church and Statehouse) in Ashes, Saying, The Rogues should harbour no more there.

NARRATOR:

Laurence was Richard Lawrence "of Oxford University," as Mathews says, "and for Wit, Learning and Sobriety equall'd there by few," and Drummond was William Drummond, "a sober Scotch Gentleman of good repute," who had been governor of North Carolina and whom Sir William bitterly hated for his "Pretensions in Common for the publick." But neither their self-sacrifice and devotion nor the courage of General Bacon's troops in storming a fortified town in the face of superior numbers and under the guns of the British ships could save the Virginian cause. The Governor was safe with his friends on the Eastern shore, his self-serving reports of the rising had gone off to England and it was only a question of time until the Red Coats would come.

Bacon attempted to bind his followers by oath to "Joine him on Pain of Death and retire into the Wildernesse upon Arivall of the forces expected from England," but the trained bands of Gloucester were reluctant to sign and the game was up. Sick and without hope, his long campaigns against the Indians in the Dragon Swamp and the summer forests burning in the fever in his veins, Bacon fell back upon the plantation of Thomas Pate on



Portopotank Creek in Gloucester and there in late October died.

MATHEWS:

Mr Bacon now returns from his last Expedition Sick of a Flux, without finding any Enemy Indians, having not gone far by reason of the Vexations behind him, nor had he one dry day in all his marches to and fro in the Forest, and in a While Bacon dyes. . . . Bacons Body was so made away, as his Bones were never found to be Exposed on a Gibbet as was purpos'd, Stones being laid in his Coffin.

SOUND:

*The lute and the melody. It continues under the narrator's voice.*

NARRATOR:

The tragedy of Nathaniel Bacon as Thomas Mathews tells it, is the artless, simple tragedy that puts all careful art to shame. Leader of a war against the Indians which became, without his willing it, a war for freedom; master of the Colony of Virginia not by his own contriving with the people but by the Governor's mistrust and terror of the people; victor in other wars than those he meant to fight; Nathaniel Bacon died at the age of twenty-nine, well-loved and long mourned for, not of an Indian's arrow or the Governor's gibbet but of a flux and fever in a stranger's house.

THE WOMAN  
SINGING:

Nat Bacon's bones  
Were never found,  
Nat Bacon's grave  
Is willder ground. . . .

NARRATOR:

But if Bacon's end was the end of tragedy, the Governor's end was the end of hateful spite. Drummond, the sober Scotch gentleman, he murdered in cold, ironical, judicial murder. Lawrence, the Oxford graduate of "Wit Learning and Sobriety equall'd there by few," he drove west in the snow beyond the heads of the Rivers to die, and twenty or more of the few thousand impoverished citizens of the Colony he hung on public gibbets for Nathaniel Bacon's crimes.

MATHEWS:

In few daies Mr Drummond was brought in, when the Governour being on board a Ship came Immediately to Shore and Complimented him with the Ironicall Sarcasm of a low Bend, saying "Mr. Drummond! You are very welcome, I am more Glad to See you, than any man in Virginea, Mr. Drummond you shall be hang'd in half an hour"; who answered "what your honour pleases," and as soon as a Council of War cou'd meet, his Sentence be despatcht and a Gibbet erected, (which took near Two hours) He was Executed.

The last Account of Mr. Lawrence was from an uppermost plantation, whence he and Four others Desperado's with horses pistols, march'd away in a Snow Ankle Deep, who were thought to have Cast themselves into a Branch of some River, rather than to be treated like Drummond. . . .

THE WOMAN  
SINGING:  
(*softly*)

Nat Bacon's tongue  
Doth sound! Doth sound!

NARRATOR:

But the Governor's triumph was neither long  
nor sweet.

MATHEWS:

The Governour went in the Fleet to London  
and by next Shipping Came back a Person  
who waited on his Honour in his Voyage and  
untill his Death, from whom a report was  
Whisper'd about, that the King did Say  
"That old fool has hang'd more men in that  
naked Country, than he [the King] had done  
for the Murther of his Father," whereof the  
Governour hearing dyed soon after without  
having seen his Majesty.

SOUND:

*The melody loud and triumphant, not on a lute  
now but on strong and singing strings.*

NARRATOR:

"Which," says Thomas Mathews at the end,  
"shuts up this tragedy." But honest writer  
though he was, Thomas Mathews lived too  
early to know the ending of his story. The  
true end was not the spaniel's death in Eng-  
land of a subject whom his King had snubbed.  
The true end was a Declaration made in Phil-  
adelphia a hundred years from Bacon's death,  
by men who would not live as subjects. And  
that ending was not tragedy but freedom.

THE WOMAN  
SINGING:  
(*triumphantly*)

The rich and proud  
Deny his name,  
The rich and proud  
Defile his fame:  
The proud and free  
Cry shame! Cry shame!

SOUND:

*The music stops. There is a moment's silence.  
Then the chords of the instrument are struck  
with strong fingers and the woman's voice rings  
out.*

THE WOMAN  
SINGING:

Nat Bacon's blood  
Makes sweet this land.

.

X

SOCORRO, WHEN YOUR SONS  
FORGET

.



## SOCORRO, WHEN YOUR SONS FORGET

SOUND:

*A cheering, stamping, holiday crowd. Behind the sound of the crowd and the noise of the cheering, a brass band breaks into a medley of republican songs—"The Marseillaise," "Yankee Doodle," the tunes of the other American republics—the phrases half recognized but lost in a jangle of brass and breath. The music breaks off suddenly. A voice booms out over the movement and murmur of the people.*

ORATOR:

And what was the passion that inspired them, my fellow citizens? What was it but the proud determination to be free, the proud purpose of independence?

SOUND:

*The cheering of the crowd: a burst of music.*

ORATOR:

For three hundred years, my fellow citizens, the American colonies, the colonies not only of the English crown but of the Spanish crown, the Portuguese crown, the French—for three hundred years the American colonies accepted in supine docility the rule of European kings.

For three hundred years men in America, men of all the tongues and races of America,

ORATOR:  
(*cont.*)

meek in their obedience to their European masters, lived not as men but subjects of those monarchs.

For three hundred years the new world of the American continent was a world new only on the maps and to the voyagers—but in other things, in men and in the government of men, not new.

For three hundred years the shadow of the Old World and the past lay dark across the New World and the future. The New World in those centuries was the darkened shadow of the Old.

And then, without premonitory warning—without a signal that the eye could see—the light blazed up along the western rim of heaven. In one man's lifetime, in a single generation, in colonies as far apart as Massachusetts Bay and Santiago, on coasts as distant from each other as Connecticut and Brazil, the will to independence blossomed into flame, the pride of independence set the world on fire. The meek obedient colonies determined to be nations . . .

SOUND:       *The crowd cheering.*

ORATOR:       . . . determined to be independent nations  
                  . . .

SOUND:       *The band-music over the cheering of the crowd.  
                  The sound fades out. Then silence.*



AN OLD MAN'S  
VOICE:  
(*grave and with  
authority*)

You wish me to say whether I believe that at the beginning of the revolution, or at the assembly of the first Congress, the leaders of that day were resolved on independence.

I readily express my entire belief (*Pause*) that they were not . . .

SOUND:

*The band-music faint and at a distance and dying out as though some eddy of time had caught it and lifted it and let it fall.*

NARRATOR:  
(*softly*)

The orators of the anniversaries of independence would question your recollection, sir. They would inquire respectfully who you were.

THE OLD MAN'S  
VOICE:

I must admit that my means of information were more limited than may have been the case with others still living to answer the inquiry. My first entrance on public life was in May, 1776, when I became a member of the Convention in Virginia which instructed her delegates in Congress to propose the Declaration of Independence. . . . I can only say, therefore, that so far as ever came to my knowledge, no one of the leaders of that day ever avowed, or was understood to entertain a pursuit of independence at the assembly of the first Congress or for a considerable period thereafter.

NARRATOR:

This was the recollection of Mr. James Madison written to the learned Jared Sparks in 1828, when Mr. Madison was an old man.

NARRATOR:  
(*cont.*)

However, Mr. Madison, as he himself says, came late into the golden generation. There were two who could speak from a larger experience than Mr. Madison's, and a third whose knowledge of independence in America has never been challenged. There were General Washington and Dr. Franklin and there was Mr. Jefferson.

THE VOICE OF  
THE GENERAL:  
(*firm, cold, indignant*)

You are led to believe that the people of Massachusetts are rebellious, setting up for independency and what not. Give me leave, my good friend, to tell you that you are abused, grossly abused. Give me leave to add, and I think I can announce it as a fact, that it is not the wish or interest of that government, or any other upon this continent, separately or collectively, to set up for independence; but this you may at the same time rely on, that none of them will ever submit to the loss of those valuable rights and privileges, which are essential to the happiness of every free state, and without which life, liberty, and property are rendered totally insecure.

THE VOICE OF  
DR. FRANKLIN:  
(*urbane, pleasant, humorous*)

I assured Lord Chatham that having more than once travelled almost from one end of the continent to the other, and kept a great variety of company, eating, drinking, and conversing with them freely, I never had heard in any conversation from any person, drunk or sober, the least expression of a wish for a separation, or a hint that such a thing would be advantageous to America.

THE VOICE OF  
MR. JEFFERSON:  
*(judicious, careful, considering  
what he says)*

What, eastward of New York, might have been the dispositions towards England before the commencement of hostilities, I know not; before that I never heard a whisper of a disposition to separate from Great Britain; and after that, its possibility was contemplated with affliction by all.

NARRATOR:

These were the views of General Washington and Dr. Franklin and Mr. Jefferson, expressed in letters written in 1774 and 1775 and 1821.

General Washington and Dr. Franklin and Mr. Jefferson may, of course, have been mistaken. Governor Richard Penn of Pennsylvania was questioned at the outbreak of the revolution—in November, 1775, to be exact—by the House of Lords. His testimony is recorded as follows:

SOUND:

*The murmur and stir of an assembly.*

A NOBLE LORD:

Are you personally acquainted with many of the Members of Congress?

GOVERNOR PENN:

I am acquainted with almost all the members of the Congress.

A NOBLE LORD:

Do you think they levy and carry on this war for the purpose of establishing an independent empire?

GOVERNOR PENN:

I think they do not carry on the war for independency. I never heard them breathe sentiments of that nature.

A NOBLE LORD: For what purpose do you believe they have taken up arms?

GOVERNOR PENN: In defense of their liberties.

NARRATOR: In defense of their liberties?

Or for the fierce resolve of independence of which the orators have spoken on so many anniversaries of independence in so many republics of this continent?

In defense of the liberties of the people against the oppressors of the people, whoever they are, of whatever kind, however they call themselves, wherever they are found?

SOUND: *A guitar playing a ballad tune, a phrase of simple music with the plainness, the rightness, the lack of self-consciousness of the anonymous music of the people in all countries. The music is gentle, tentative. It fades.*

NARRATOR: Or for the independence of governments and the establishment of nations?

SOUND: *The band-music, distant but strong, pompous, assertive and fading out.*

NARRATOR: What was it that set the American continent on fire from the northern to the southern edge of snow in a single generation?—the independence?—or the liberties?

(Pause)

There is one witness who, if he had his breath again, could speak to that question—one among many.

A VOICE:

(*pompous, official, sycophantic*)

Señor Dr. Don Pedro Romero Saráchaga:

Señor:

On the same day about half past five of the afternoon I received a box brought by two persons, and in it the head of José Antonio Galán which, viewed by all the assembly (since it was late) was sent to the public jail under the necessary guard and today, the fourth day of February in the year of our Lord, 1782, about nine o'clock in the morning it was affixed in a wooden cage, at the entrance of this town, to a pole of considerable height, and in the most public place, looking toward the town of Charalá, of which he was a native. God our lord preserve you for many years.

SOUND:

*The guitar playing the ballad tune but stronger, more nervous, more insistent.*

NARRATOR:

José Antonio Galán on his pole of considerable height in the most public place of Guáduas looking toward the town of Charalá of which he was a native—José Antonio Galán knew something of the wars of freedom in his own country of Nueva Granada, which is now called Colombia, and had earned the right to speak of them. He had come by painful ways to that public place and that high pole.

SOUND:

*A roll of ceremonial drums.*

VOICE OF THE  
JUDGE:

We sentence José Antonio Galán to be taken from the jail, dragged to the place of punishment where he shall be placed on the gallows until dead, that when lowered his head shall be cut off, the rest of his body divided into four parts; and, the remainder having been burned (for which purpose a bonfire shall be made before the scaffold), his head shall be taken to Guáduas, scene of his scandalous insults, the right hand set up in the plaza of Socorro, the left in the village of San Gil, the right foot in Charalá, his birthplace; the left foot in Mogotes; his descendants shall be declared infamous, his property seized and applied to the Royal Exchequer; his house levelled to the ground and the site sown with salt; so that in this wise his infamous name shall be forgotten and so vile a person, so detestable a memory, shall perish without other recollection than that of the hatred and fear inspired by the hideousness of his crime.

SOUND:

*The ballad tune, loud, sharp, passionate. It continues under the woman's voice.*

A WOMAN'S  
VOICE:

*(not young but not  
old—a strong,  
harsh, bitter voice)*

And what was the hideousness of the crime for which José Antonio Galán was thus hung and dismembered, his limbs exposed to dogs and birds, his name proscribed, his descendants declared infamous, his house levelled, the site of his dwelling sown with salt?

SOUND:

*The ballad tune rising.*

THE WOMAN'S  
VOICE:  
*(the guitar nervously under)*

What was the hideousness and unspeakable evil of the crime of José Antonio Galán? Had he murdered innumerable men and women?

THE MAN WITH  
THE GUITAR:  
*(sullenly, the guitar under)*

He had killed no one.

THE WOMAN'S  
VOICE:  
*(the guitar under)*

Had he robbed the poor and desecrated the churches?

THE MAN WITH  
THE GUITAR:  
*(the guitar under)*

He had taken nothing from the poor. He had conducted himself with decency and veneration before God.

THE WOMAN'S  
VOICE:  
*(the guitar under)*

What then had he done—José Antonio Galán? What had he done to be so punished?

THE MAN WITH  
THE GUITAR:  
*(singing the tune he has been playing)*

They killed him on the gallows tree,  
They tore his body part from part,  
His head they took from his neck bone,  
They burned before his face his heart.

They left him neither mound nor grave,  
They left no tongues to speak him well,  
They left no stones to mark his house,  
No stone to mark: no tongue to tell.

On Guáduas pole they put his head,  
Socorro lifted his right hand,  
San Gil his left hand lifted up,  
In Charalá his foot did stand.

THE MAN WITH  
THE GUITAR:  
(*cont.*)      Socorro, when your sons forget,  
San Gil, when you forget this man,  
When you forget him, Charalá,  
The stones—the stones—will cry Galán.

SOUND:      *Silence—the guitar strumming on.*

THE MAN WITH  
THE GUITAR:      Ask the judges for the reasons. They can tell  
you the reasons.

SOUND:      *The roll of ceremonial drums.*

VOICE OF THE  
JUDGE:      Leading and captaining a corps of men, he incited that town of Facatativa to rebellion; rifled the administrative offices of the State monopoly of rum, tobacco and playing cards; appointed captains from among the seditious and the rebels; showed force by formally resisting two parties of honored citizens who set out from this city to check his hostilities and went to the extreme of disarming them and making them prisoners; continued to Mariquita where he insulted the Governor of that Province; advanced thence to the hacienda called Mal-paso, belonging to Don Vicente Drago, inciting the slaves, promising and granting them freedom as if he were their legal owner; went down to Ambalema, where he sacked, destroyed and sold a considerable quantity of tobacco belonging to his Majesty, distributing a great part of the proceeds to his infamous allies. . . .

THE WOMAN'S  
VOICE:      Insulted the Governor of the Province, freed slaves, resisted the respectable citizens sent to



arrest him, broke into the offices of the state monopolies of rum, tobacco and playing cards, distributing the proceeds among the people. And for this he was hung, drawn, quartered. . . .

*(Silence)*

THE MAN WITH  
THE GUITAR:

Ask the witnesses then . . . Ask the Informers . . .

*(singing as if to himself)*

Socorro, when your sons forget,  
San Gil, when you forget this man . . .

Ask the Informers. The Informers never forget. They remember everything. . . .

VOICE OF THE  
INFORMER:  
*(glib, busy, officious)*

It is difficult to speak of this sedition in the usual manner. It was not an orderly sedition. At the beginning of the sedition there were no leaders such as are commonly found. There was first the sedition and after that there were the leaders or conspirators of the sedition. As though the sedition had begotten the conspirators. Which is exceptional. If it were not altogether illogical one would say that the people made the sedition of themselves and without leaders as the dust rises in the wind. It is a fact nevertheless that the beginning so far as is reported or known was only a woman, a certain Manuela Beltrán. It was Manuela Beltrán who tore down the edict from the door of the town council, the Cabildo. But this Manuela Beltrán was no more than a woman of the people. . . . Or it may be that the beginning was the drum. . . .

SOUND:

*A hurried drum at a distance. Footsteps running. The sound continues under.*

THE INFORMER:

It is reported that somebody beat the drum and they came running and shouting to the door of the Cabildo and there were rockets fired off and they ran into the streets shouting: "Long live the King and death to bad government," and this Manuela Beltrán tore down the edict. It is impossible to attribute responsibility for this action in the customary manner with the usual identifications and dossiers. Even the resident and mayor of the town of Socorro—for it was in Socorro this sedition took place—even the resident and mayor, Señor Doctor Don José Ignacio de Ángulo y Olarte, when he was questioned afterwards and swore by God our Lord and made the sign of the Cross, in conformity with law, offering to tell the truth as he knew it—even he was unable to speak with precision of this occurrence.

THE MAYOR:

*(a precious and effeminate voice but in no sense ridiculous or foolish—dangerous rather)*

. . . that on the same day of the sedition I could not distinguish one person from another because all who appeared concealed their faces by turning down the brims of their hats; but after some days I learned that José Delgadillo had beaten the drum and at its sound there followed him Roque Cristancho, Ignacio the blue-eyed Ardila, Pablo the lame Ardila, Miguel de Uribe and many other of their associates; and that it is a fact that on

that day Don Salvador Plata spoke about observing the orders of the Regente and Officers, at which they were angered, telling him to "get down from there," a shout that was heard in the tumult, and that I recognized only Manuela Beltrán, who tore up the edict. . . .

SOUND:

*The drum and the mob fading.*

THE INFORMER:

As you see even the Mayor, Señor Doctor Don José Ignacio de Ángulo y Olarte, was unable to report precisely how this sedition came about nor was the Cabildo, the town council, prepared to account for it otherwise than by reference to the additional taxes for the support of the Windward Navy and the regrettable but irrelevant circumstance, of no consideration in a court of procedure and justice, that there had died in the town of Socorro of hunger in the second year before this sedition a quantity of men and women and children to the number of six thousand which is a matter for consolation and solace but of no evidentiary value in determining the names, parentage, permanent addresses, present property and recommended punishments of the conspirators, ring-leaders, rebels and other brigands of which at the commencement of this sedition, there was an unfortunate and regrettable absence and complete lack. The following are the words spoken by the Cabildo of Socorro to the Viceroy.

VOICE OF THE  
OFFICER OF THE  
CABILDO:

What they first rejected was the order that there be collected from them a new tax called the Windward Tax which obviously weighed heavily on all the poor, who are the ones that work in cotton, textiles, weaving, soap, tanning et cetera; and who with such a regulation had no loophole nor help in escaping from payment.

Besides there was the other tax for custom-house permits and landing certificates, very prejudicial to commerce. Likewise another order said to have been published at Santa Fé to the effect that each pay two pesos, and others, the servants and domestics, one peso. And more than this, there is the bad treatment that the ministers and rent collectors give the subjects, viewing them as the vilest slaves. All of which, together with the poor conditions of these jurisdictions, has been the reason that they have uprisen to such a degree that there is no remedy for it unless the compassion of Your Excellency serve to inform our King and Lord. . . . As to the fact that the people are resolute and determined we can offer no explanation; there are enlisted and on the point of making war in their own defense, no less than twenty thousand men and it is believed that their numbers will increase until the uprising has spread throughout the realm, uniting all.

THE INFORMER:

As you see, no names, no identifications, merely taxes and hardships. And for the very

good reason, as I repeat and report, that there were no leaders, only this Manuela and the lame Ardila and the blond Ardila; and the Mayor Señor Doctor Don José Ignacio de Ángulo y Olarte had run away and the Lieutenant Señor Don Clemente Estévez had wished to run away but had committed himself instead and by error to the church vaults and was unable to emerge again in safety. So that there were, as the Officer of the Cabildo says, twenty thousand men resolute and determined but without leaders which was never before seen—that the sedition made itself without leaders of the sedition. Whereupon there occurred and took place what is altogether unheard of in all records and reports of seditions, rebellions, conspiracies, plots, counter-plots and revolutions, that the people having risen against the lawful government and against the respectable citizens and others in authority, compelled and obliged the respectable citizens to become captains of the sedition. As is better seen in the lamentable testimony of Señor Don Salvador Plata, one of the richest and most respectable of the citizens of Socorro.

DON SALVADOR:  
*(an old man's  
voice, weak and  
frightened)*

A mob came to our houses, enraged to the degree that it put us to the torture of either accepting the captaincies, or dying with our wives and children. We resisted, as is well known, as is also the fact that we could dissuade them neither with prayers nor tears, of which we all availed ourselves, nor could I

DON SALVADOR: succeed with the fee of five hundred pesos  
(*cont.*) that I offered them if they would excuse me  
(*fading out*) as Isidro Molina publicly confessed. . . .

THE INFORMER: Neither bribes, that is, nor tears nor supplications availed with this sedition without leaders which demanded leaders and which compelled leaders to lead it. Altogether there were six of these captains chosen from among the rich men and the respectable citizens of Socorro, including Don Salvador Plata and the Commander General, Don Juan Francisco Berbeo. But whether it was they who were the leaders of the people or the people who were the leaders of the leaders it is difficult to say, for the people when they walked under the balcony of Captain Don Salvador Plata at night would sing certain songs of which the meaning was apparently ironical with such words as: Don't worry, Plata. You have nothing to worry about, Plata. You are one of us now, Plata. Tied up with us!

A WOMAN'S  
VOICE:  
(*lusty and mocking*) No te de cuidado, Plata,  
que bien amarrado estas:  
como no te nos desates,  
no hay miedo de que te vas . . .

SOUND: *A roar of laughter drowning out the song.*

THE INFORMER: Nevertheless, it was by this Commander General Juan Francisco Berbeo that this Galán, of whom inquiry is now made, was appointed to

the sedition. José Antonio Galán was not of the character of Berbeo and Don Salvador Plata, a rich man and a respectable citizen. His office, as he testified at the trial which condemned him, was that of laborer; his estate was, married; his age was thirty-two years.

Nevertheless, the Sedition was well served by this Captain Galán, for when the corsairs were sent out in his pursuit from Bogotá de Santa Fé, he resisted them in the Caves of Facatativa and routed them altogether, taking many prisoners. And by this and other successes of these rebels, the revolution was, as they believed, won. Which is to say that the Royal Commission of the Viceroy was brought to submit to the Commander General of the Sedition a proposal for capitulations, which capitulations, on the eighth day of June, 1781, were accepted by the Viceroy, ratified and signed by the Junta of Tribunals, and reaffirmed and sworn to by the Royal Commissioners at a solemn high mass in the town of Cipaquirá, the sacrament being there and then unveiled for the purpose. Whereupon the armies of the people, convinced by the solemnity of this act of the victory of their cause and the security of their persons, disbanded and returned to their homes carrying with them certified and authenticated copies of the capitulations as trophies, relics and protections, since it was affirmed in these capitulations that all the rebels were pardoned and forgiven.

OUND:

*The guitar and the ballad tune.*

THE INFORMER:

It was at this point, with the armies of the people disbanded, and the people returning peacefully to their homes, that the evil and rebellious will and purpose of this José Antonio Galán was made apparent. For, a considerable reinforcement of Spanish soldiers having arrived in Bogotá, it so happened that the Viceroy reconsidered the capitulations offered and agreed to on his behalf, and signed by his Commissioners, and reaffirmed and sworn to at a solemn mass in the presence of the holy sacrament in the church of Cipaquirá, and it so happened, further, that, having reconsidered these capitulations the authorities and dignitaries at Bogotá determined to disapprove them and to issue an edict reestablishing the monopoly of tobacco. Whereupon and without further ado or delay or consideration of his duty and loyalty to the King and Viceroy this Captain José Antonio Galán, whose fame had now reached to the uttermost parts of that region of Magdalena and beyond to the farthest reaches of Nueva Granada, did incontinently and recklessly write and publish an inflammatory and scandalous petition to the Captaincies and commons of the Municipality of Socorro inciting them to revolt and to save their lives while they still could, blasphemously and disloyally alleging that they had been cheated and deceived, the which petition by its bad writing and its ill logic



sufficiently testifies to the character and ignorance of this wicked man.

VOICE OF GALÁN: Señores Captains and Comúns of the Municipality of Socorro whom we consider on our side:  
(*a powerful, violent, harsh, commanding voice*)

Very esteemed Señores and dear companions: We apprise you that we of this poor parish and its Común find ourselves in a confusing Babylon with the general sound of so many threats and without advice as to the most suitable remedy to be applied against this ruin with which we are threatened by those at the Court at Santa Fé [de Bogotá] and by the whole Spanish Realm because of the disastrous outcome of our effort the last time, so that they have sold us out, the money-grubbers, the scoundrels, the traitors—for the which ruin and threat we find no other remedy than to start over with the knowledge gained by experience.

And since your Común and its Captaincies urged us on in the last uprising, it seems to us a matter deserving of great reproach that you are now in the lethargy of deep sleep. You do not consider us worthy of the barest information as to your intentions, but it is ours that you should take heart and that we should again follow our Enterprise.

This being so, Señores, what are we doing? What are we waiting for? For Santa Fé to get everything ready and for troops which are

VOICE OF GALÁN: now ready to come up from below to annihilate us without even sparing the innocent?  
(*cont.*)

As they have promised?

Let us take heart, then, and see if at cost of our lives we cut out this pernicious cancer that threatens our ruin in honor and property, and when it does not menace our lives, threatens to stamp us with the infamous smirch and enduring disgrace of a shameful slavery.

SOUND: *The sharp strong notes of the guitar, the ballad tune taking on a marching rhythm. It continues under the voice of the Informer.*

THE INFORMER: After this violent and rebellious act and in view of the great fame and influence of this evil man among the people of the country there was of course no choice but to take and punish him, which was duly done with the aid of certain devices by his fellow captain of the Común of Socorro, Don Salvador Plata, who by this means made adequate and convincing amends to the Viceroy and the Crown of Spain, the said Galán being arrested on the twelfth day of October, 1781, tried on the nineteenth of October, sentenced on the thirtieth day of January in the year 1782, executed with all the various formalities and tortures duly and lawfully prescribed, on the same day, the receipt for his head being executed and signed by the Mayor of Guáduas on the fourth February following.

These were the causes and reasons that José Antonio Galán was hung, drawn, quartered, his house levelled to the ground, the site thereof sown with salt, his name proscribed, his sons declared infamous.

SOUND: *The ballad tune has become a marching music of guitars, fifes, drums, feet marching, voices shouting.*

THE VOICES: Socorro, when your sons forget,  
San Gil, when you forget this man,  
When you forget him, Charalá,  
The stones—the stones—will shout Galán.

THE NARRATOR: These were the causes and the reasons that  
(*gravely*) José Antonio Galán was barbarously and brutally put to death by the Spanish officials and authorities in Nueva Granada in January, 1782. These were his crimes: that he fought for the liberties of the people; that he led the people against their oppressors; that he failed.

THE VOICES: Socorro, when your sons forget,  
San Gil, when you forget this man. . . .

SOUND: *The voices fade out. There is silence.*

VOICE OF THE NOBLE LORD: For what purpose do you believe they have taken up arms?

GOVERNOR PENN: In defense of their liberties.

(*Silence*)

GENERAL WASH-  
INGTON:

. . . but this you may at the same time rely on, that none of them will ever submit to the loss of those valuable rights and privileges, which are essential to the happiness of every free state, and without which, life, liberty, and property are rendered totally insecure.

## APPENDIX

Source material quoted in *The American Story* and not otherwise acknowledged below was translated directly for this work from the original contemporary texts in Spanish, Portuguese or French.

### I. *The Admiral*

Quotations throughout from *The Journal of Columbus* (during his first Voyage, 1492-93). . . . Translated by Sir Clements R. Markham for the Hakluyt Society. (London. 1893)

### II. *The Names for the Rivers*

Quotations severally from:

Edwin Arber: *The First Three English Books on America*. (Birmingham. 1885)

H. P. Biggar: *The Voyages of Jacques Cartier*. Edited and Translated by H. P. Biggar. (Ottawa: A. F. Acland. 1924)

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## VI. *The Many Dead*

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## VII. *Ripe Strawberries and Gooseberries and Sweet Single Roses*

The Elizabethan song *Have Over the Water to Floryda* is quoted from the anthology, *An American Garland*, edited by C. H. Firth. (Oxford: Blackwell. 1915)

The incidental quotations are from the books by Father Joseph de Acosta already listed (Grimston's seventeenth-century translation); from Richard Eden's sixteenth-century translation of Peter Martyr's *Decades of the New World*; from Richard Hakluyt's sixteenth-century *Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques, and Discoveries of the English Nation*; from Samuel Champlain's *Narrative of a Voyage to the West Indies and Mexico* translated by Alice Wilmere for the Hakluyt Society and published in 1858; and from the

Hakluyt Society's translations of *Documents Concerning English Voyages to the Spanish Main, 1569-1580*. (London: For the Hakluyt Society. 1932)

The long quotation from the formal examination of David Ingram is from B. F. De Costa: *Ancient Norombega or the Voyages of Simon Ferdinando to the Penobscot River, 1579-1580*. (Albany, N. Y.: Joel Munsell's Sons. 1890)

### VIII. *Between the Silence and the Surf*

Material on Plymouth quoted from Governor William Bradford's *History of Plymouth Plantation* and from S. Moul't's *Relation* of the founding of Plymouth quoted from Bradford's and Winslow's *Journal*.

Material on Santiago de Chile quoted from Robert B. Cunninghame Grahame's translation of Pedro de Alvarado's letters to the King, in R. B. Cunninghame Grahame: *Pedro de Valdivia, Conqueror of Chile*. (London: Heinemann. 1926)

Material on Olinda (Pernambuco) quoted from Lopez Vaz' *A Discourse on the West Indies and the South sea written by Lopez Vaz a Portugall*, in Hakluyt's *Voyages*.

Material on Acadia from Marc Lescarbot's *Nova Francia, a Description of Acadia*. Translated by Pierre Erondelle. (London. 1609)

Material on Virginia from Captain Arthur Barlowe's Account of his voyage, reprinted in Old South Leaflets (No. 92) under the title *The First Voyage to Roanoke, 1584*.

### IX. *Nat Bacon's Bones*

Material on Sousa de Menezes from texts quoted in translation in Robert Southey's *History of Brazil*, Vol. I. (London. 1810)

Material on Sir Edmund Andros from Increase Mather's *Narratives of the Miseries of New England* (London. 1688)



and *A Narrative of the Proceedings of Sir Edmond Androsse and his Complices*, by Several Gentlemen who were of his Council (London. 1691)

Material on Sir William Berkeley and Nathaniel Bacon from T. M.'s *Beginning, Progress and Conclusion of Bacon's Rebellion* (Ms., 1705), from Force's *Historical Tracts*, and from citations in Thomas Jefferson Wertebaker's *Torchbearer of the Revolution* (Princeton University Press. 1940)

#### X. Socorro, *When Your Sons Forget*

The statements by Madison, Franklin, Washington and Jefferson are from *The Writings of George Washington* edited by Jared Sparks (Boston: American Stationers Co.: J. B. Russell. 1834-37). Franklin's statement is also in *The Writings of Benjamin Franklin* edited by Albert Henry Smith (Macmillan. 1905-07); Jefferson's statement is also in a letter quoting him, by Geo. Alexander Otis, Feb. 19, 1822, printed in Wm. Jay's *Life of John Jay* (Harper. 1833)

The material about the Comuneros was translated for *The American Story* from the collection of original documents relating to the uprising published by Manuel Briceño in *Los Comuneros* (Bogotá. 1880). The author is also indebted—not for quoted material, but as all readers must be, for background and atmosphere—to Dr. Germán Arciniegas' fine work of reconstruction and interpretation, also entitled *Los Comuneros* (Bogotá. 1938).

























